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ECCLESIAE CATHEDRALIS ELIENSIS

DONO DEDIT,

JOSEPHUS ALLEN, S.T.P.

EPISCOPUS ELIENSIS.

A.D. 1845.

HISTORY

OF THE

ENGLISH EPISCOPACY.

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY JAMES MOYES,
Castle Street, Leicester Square.

A HISTORY
OF THE
ENGLISH EPISCOPACY;
FROM THE
PERIOD OF THE LONG PARLIAMENT TO THE
ACT OF UNIFORMITY;
WITH NOTICES OF THE
RELIGIOUS PARTIES OF THE TIME,
AND A REVIEW OF
ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS IN ENGLAND,
FROM
THE REFORMATION.

BY THE REV. THOMAS LATHBURY, M.A.
OXON.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XXXVI.

PREFACE.

No very formal apology is necessary for an attempt to throw additional light, or to give juster views on, an important and most interesting portion of English history. The affairs of religion occupied so prominent a place during the reign of the first Charles, and down to the period of the restoration, that the civil history of that period is necessarily also an ecclesiastical history; and, therefore, a history of the church during the same period cannot be written without furnishing materials for civil history. It will be found, however, that I have confined myself, with some strictness, to matters ecclesiastical and religious.

I fancied that, from a careful examination, not only of the established authorities for the history of the period in question, but of the sermons, pamphlets, and other fugitive pieces of the time, a juster notion of the spirit of the different sects might be arrived at, and many details might be brought together which would furnish a fuller and truer picture of the religious state of the country and of the condition of the clergy than has yet been exhibited. I also fancied that the errors of a few churchmen of that trying time had been exaggerated and imputed to the whole body, while the merits of the class had been depreciated, and their sufferings overlooked. It appeared to me, also, that claims were made (on behalf of opponents of the church) upon our admiration for

qualities which they did not possess, and for sympathy in sufferings which had not been endured, or which had been exaggerated; the virtues and the sufferings of the latter class being alike turned to the disadvantage of the church by invidious comparisons or by direct imputations.

If it be imagined that I intended to vindicate all the proceedings of Archbishop Laud, or deny the merits or the sufferings of many of the separatists from the episcopal church, I shall have greatly failed in imparting my own views to the reader. My object has been, by softening colours which in some cases seemed too harsh, and casting more light upon points which have hitherto remained in the shade, to present a picture which would, on the whole, give a true historical likeness of the times. Above all, I have been anxious to rescue not only individuals, but whole classes of men, from being answerable for maxims and proceedings which all men now agree in condemning, but which were the common error of the times, and, therefore, are not justly attributable to any depravity of individuals, or any views peculiar to any one party.

But, though I do not question that my attempt will be considered to require little apology, I am sensible that there is much which needs indulgence in the execution.

I am painfully sensible of the disadvantage under which I labour, from my want of practice in writing for the press; and I well know how much the work would have gained had my materials been handled by one accustomed to address the public as an author.

There are, however, points upon which I am still more anxious than upon any matter merely involving my literary skill. I have considered that it fell within the scope of my work to exhibit specimens of the language in which fanatics of other times addressed the public from the pulpit and through the press. It appeared to me that I should omit an important feature of the times of which I wish to exhibit a portraiture, if I had not produced such specimens. The sentiments they express, however, are in many instances so uncharitable, the language and illustrations so unsuitable to the reverence due to the matters to which they refer, that some excuse is necessary for recalling from the oblivion to which they had been fitly consigned, those unseemly relics of an unhappy time. If I believed that the cause of true religion would suffer by exhibiting the extravagances of any professors of religion, I humbly trust that I should have been incapable of lending my hand to the withdrawal of the veil. But I consider it a weak, and even a wicked notion, that the cause of true religion can suffer by exhibiting in their true colours the language and deportment of those who, under the pretence of zeal for the gospel, indulged in language which clearly proceeded, if not from worldly motives, from mere human passions.

History will never impart all the instruction which is capable of being extracted from it. But it is not questioned, that its lessons have not been entirely lost upon mankind.

The encroachments of the crown have, in this country, been so effectually restrained, that any apprehension of danger to civil liberty from that

quarter is little less than visionary. Religious liberty is no less securely protected against the aggressions of churchmen. Men learned the blessings of civil and religious liberty from the lessons of history; and the prevailing opinions at length ripened into wholesome laws. So far history has taught its lessons with effect: whether there be not dangers from opposite quarters, against which history has not given her warnings so distinctly, or has not been listened to with the same docility, may, perhaps, be questioned; but it is not a matter of doubt, that every addition to our knowledge of history tends, on the whole, to make men less liable to fall into popular errors, to enable them to cast off their own prejudices, to soften the judgments which they form of the opinions and conduct of those who are opposed to them. It is the opinion, that every historical work which is honestly written may assist in producing these happy results, which has emboldened me to lay before the public this slight contribution to their knowledge of the ecclesiastical history of England.

It may be proper to mention, that circumstances have prevented me from attending to the book while in the press. I fear there are many typographical errors, which the reader must pardon, where they are pardonable; and where blame must still remain, it must, on account of the state of my manuscript, be divided between me and the gentleman who corrected the press.

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ERRATA.

The Author begs to offer an apology to his readers for the following inaccuracies : —

- Page 1, *for* English Episcopacy, *read* the English, &c.
7, *for* a convocation, *read* in convocation.
15, *for* Poynel, *read* Poynet.
16, *insert* a comma after "gradually."
17, *for* on the face of, *read* in the face of.
25, *for* on different hours, *read* at different hours.
29, *for* consecrations, *read* consecration.
32, *for* liturgy, *read* litany, in lines 11 and 18.
62, *for* platforms, *read* platform.
74, *for* formed, *read* found.
86, *for* histrio-mastic, *read* histrio-mastix.
104, *for* sects, *read* Scots.
117, *for* consent of primate, *read* defence of.
122, *for* receptions of petitions, *read* reception of.
123, *for* Dr. Hackel, *read* Dr. Hacket.
128, *for* were intrusted, *read* was intrusted.
142, *for* by conceding their own, *read* by concealing.
148, a comma after "balanced."
156, *for* that half, *read* the half.
168, *for* prejudice to serve, *read* prejudice to some.
 for Nottingham, *read* Wokingham.
 for benefactor of the poor, *read* to the poor.
170, *for* now grant, *read* you grant.
171, *for* which he attributed, *read* must be attributed.
173, *for* would not enforce, *read* could not enforce.
174, *for* 1640, *read* 1649.
186, *for* with propositions, *read* with the propositions.
187, *for* entire demolition, *read* almost entire, &c.
225, in the note, *for* dogged, *read* digged.
228, *for* marching the High Street, *read* marching up the High Street.
234, *for* as spy, *read* as a spy.
260, *for* 1646, *read* 1656.
287, *for* are result, *read* are the result.
290, *for* could not act, *read* he could not have acted.
293, *for* prelates, *read* prelacy.
307, *insert* a full stop after "keep them steady."
308, *for* university, in note, *read* Worcestershire.
312, *for* Weston's Life, in note, *read* Walton's.
318, *for* to liturgy, *read* to the liturgy.
345, *for* Diana of the presbyterians, *read* Diana of the sectaries.
351, *for* baptism, *read* anabaptism.
359, *for* reach even, *read* exceed even.
360, *for* Lydiall, *read* Lydiat.
 for the ejected clergy, *read* that the ejected clergy.

ENGLISH EPISCOPACY.

CHAPTER I.

1528—1547.

OBJECT OF THE WORK—THE REFORMATION—MARRIAGE OF HENRY WITH HIS BROTHER'S WIDOW—THE POPE'S DISPENSING POWER QUESTIONED—DIVORCE—CRANMER AT COURT—HENRY DECLARED HEAD OF THE CHURCH—OPINIONS AND PRACTICES OF THE KING—"INSTITUTIONS OF A CHRISTIAN MAN"—SUBMISSION OF THE CLERGY—CANONS—TRANSLATION OF BIBLE—PROVIDENTIAL INTERFERENCE—INFLUENCE OF HENRY'S CHARACTER ON REFORMATION.

THE principal object of the writer, in the ensuing pages, is to give a detailed account of ecclesiastical affairs during the period intervening between the era of the Long Parliament and the Restoration: but, to render the narrative intelligible, it will be necessary to trace the origin, progress, and developement, of those principles by which English Episcopacy was ultimately subverted. The Reformation, as commenced by Henry VIII., and continued by his son Edward; the disputes among the English exiles at Frankfort during the ascendancy of Popery under Mary; and the complete establishment of Protestantism by her sister Elizabeth;—are points on which it will be necessary briefly to dwell. The state of religion in general will be noticed; but the attention of the reader will especially be directed to the history of the Anglican Church during the period of her sufferings, from the year 1640 to the year 1660, when the nation, wearied with the Usurpation, and sickened with the strange scenes that had followed in such quick

succession, unanimously recalled their lawful sovereign. Such being the object of the writer, civil matters will not be introduced, except for the purpose of rendering the narrative intelligible.

In reviewing the events of the sixteenth century, the Reformation presents itself to the mind as one of the most remarkable, whether we consider the consequences that have already resulted, or those which are likely to flow from it in future ages. Previous to that important event, the whole of Christendom reposed in error and darkness. In Germany, the change was effected long before any attempt was made in England,—unless, indeed, the opposition of Wicliffe to the corrupt practices of the Romish church may be considered as one. The light of truth had long shone on the continent of Europe, before its rays reached England: though, perhaps, it is not too much to assert that the seed, from which such an abundant harvest was eventually reaped, was originally conveyed from this country in the writings of Wicliffe, who has been not inaptly styled the morning star of the Reformation.

The causes that led to the separation of this country from the church of Rome are well known. Henry VIII. had married the widow of his brother Arthur; and, either from satiety, or from conscientious scruples relative to the validity of the marriage, was anxious to obtain a divorce. At the period of the union, the pope's dispensing power was questioned by many zealous Catholics, who did not hesitate to aver that, as the marriage was prohibited by the Divine law, the pontiff could not interfere. It is, moreover, probable that Henry, who at some seasons appears to have been under the influence of religious feelings, entertained conscientious scruples on the subject.* Wolsey first proposed the divorce, and continued to promote it, until it was discovered that the

* Robertson's Charles V. vol. ii. p. 22.

affections of the monarch were fixed on Anne Boleyn, who secretly favoured the sentiments of the reformers. After this discovery, the cardinal laboured earnestly to prevent what he had before been anxious to accomplish. When the business was first proposed to the pope, his holiness was imprisoned in France. In order, therefore, to secure the friendship of Henry, he promised a ready compliance with his wishes: but, as soon as he obtained his release, he began to view the matter in a different light. The court of Rome was, at this time, agitated by various conflicting views, from the fact that the two most powerful sovereigns in Europe, Henry and the emperor, were intimately concerned in the question, Catharine being the aunt of the latter monarch.

The pope, however, at length granted a commission, bearing date July 13, 1528, to Wolsey and Campejus, to hear the cause. Before the departure of the latter cardinal from Rome, the emperor declared his intention of espousing the cause of his aunt, a resolution that kept the pope in a state of suspense. He was anxious, if possible, to gratify both sovereigns; but, in consequence of his fears of the emperor, he secretly instructed Campejus to use his utmost exertions to cause a delay in the proceedings.* The cardinal acted as an obedient son of the church: on his arrival in England he used every effort to prevail on the queen to enter a monastery, viewing such a step as the readiest way to extricate the pope from his difficulties. No persuasions, however, were of any avail with Catharine. Many months were consumed in messages to and from Rome, but at last Henry insisted on a hearing. The king appeared before the court: the queen declined to attend, and was pronounced contumacious. The court was occupied till the 23d July, 1529, in hearing evidence respecting the marriage; when Campejus, alleging that it was usual at that season for the

* Lord Herbert, 99.

court of Rome to spend a vacation, deferred the further consideration of the case till the ensuing October. In the mean time, the emperor's agents so terrified the pontiff, that he was induced to inhibit further proceedings in England, and to advocate the cause to Rome.

These delays were by no means agreeable to the impatient monarch, who, during the discussion, had fixed his affections on Anne Boleyn. It is often asserted, that his desire to marry this lady was the original cause of his wish to obtain a divorce: but he had not seen Anne Boleyn when he first appealed to the pope.

It was at this period that Cranmer, destined, as will appear, to act so conspicuous a part in this and the succeeding reign, first appeared on the stage. Gardiner and Fox met him accidentally at dinner in Cambridgeshire. The conversation turning on the subject of the divorce, Cranmer suggested the idea of consulting the different universities respecting the validity of the marriage, a proceeding that had never been contemplated by Henry and his advisers. Cranmer was soon after invited to court, and from that moment his influence began to be felt in the king's councils.

The meeting of the two prelates with Cranmer was the hinge on which all the subsequent events depended. It was the link that connected Henry's marriage with the Reformation. Few persons, in reviewing their own history, can fail of perceiving some apparently accidental circumstance, on which, though in itself trivial, the most important events were suspended. Luther's opposition arose from the furious zeal of Tetzl in promoting the sale of indulgences. The extravagance of Leo X. was the cause that led to the expedient of indulgences: had Leo been a man of moderate views, the practice might not have been resorted to; or, had even a wiser agent than Tetzl been employed, Luther, in all human probability, would not have separated from the Roman see. Some of the most useful discoveries—dis-

coveries productive of the greatest and most lasting benefits to the human race—have originated in what is termed accident. The invention of printing, one of the most important discoveries of modern times, was, in common language, accidental.

Nothing—not even the fear of losing England—could persuade the pope to proceed with the divorce. The question was, however, proposed to the universities: their replies were favourable to the king, and were read in Parliament, which had now become interested in the quarrel. The universities concurred in the opinion that the marriage of a brother's widow was unlawful. When Henry was cited to appear at Rome, the parliament, to further his cause, enacted that no further appeals should be made to the pope. After some further delays, Henry secretly married Anne Boleyn; and Cranmer, who, on the decease of Warham, had been promoted to the see of Canterbury, in May 1533, pronounced the sentence of divorce.

The court of Rome was highly incensed at the proceedings in England. Excommunication was threatened unless the king consented to receive back his wife. Not terrified by the threats of the pontiff, and supported by his Parliament, Henry was soon declared supreme Head of the Church of England, after which the pope's jurisdiction in England ceased.

Thus, from the different views and actions of the respective parties,—the king, the pope, and the emperor,—was produced one of the most important events in English history. Neither Henry nor the pope imagined that the agitation of the divorce would have caused the Reformation. But, though the king renounced the authority of the pope, and thereby opened the door to all the subsequent changes, he still adhered to the doctrines of the church, as the Six Articles and the numerous persecutions of this reign abundantly testify. With the exception of the supremacy, he

remained a Catholic in points of faith. Owing to his caprices, the Reformation did not proceed very rapidly. In all probability, Henry never contemplated the changes that actually occurred ; but, having taken one step in opposition to the pope, he was compelled, by the force of circumstances, to proceed. Having seized for himself that power in ecclesiastical matters which had been wrested from the Pontiff, he found it necessary to consolidate it by various measures calculated to further the progress of the Reformation. One of his first acts was to strike out the name of the pope from the public liturgy : after some time, portions of the service were ordered to be read in English ; but points of faith were undisturbed. These alterations, trivial as they may appear, paved the way for all succeeding changes. In 1537 was published “ Institutions of a Christian Man.” This work was the production of Cranmer, Gardiner, Latimer, Fox, and others : it contained much excellent matter, with some slight admixture of false doctrine, and tended considerably to advance the Reformation. In 1543, another treatise, entitled “ A necessary Erudition for a Christian Man,” was set forth by royal authority. This book was an improvement on the preceding.

These were almost all the changes effected during this reign. Matters of discipline were left, by the reformers, to be arranged by the civil magistrate according to times and circumstances. The benefits resulting from the renunciation of the papal authority were not immediately felt ; for Henry, on his assuming the title of Head of the Church, thought himself at liberty to follow his own inclination in ecclesiastical affairs. Hence the various changes of this reign. At one time the Reformation proceeded prosperously : at another time the reformers were doomed to witness a retrograde movement, and an approximation to the worst parts of Popery. The great support of the cause was Cranmer, whose influence with the king, arising from his services in

extricating the monarch from the vexatious proceedings of the papal court, was always most powerful. Had Henry lived, however, the sword of persecution would have been unsheathed; nor would the influence of the primate have shielded the reformers from its violence. At the close of his reign, he manifested much severity towards those who had adopted the new doctrines. In his own practice he was neither Protestant nor Catholic: but persecuted both,—the former for denying the real presence, the latter for refusing to acknowledge his supremacy.

It is very remarkable that the clergy submitted to every change. They engaged not to assemble a convocation without his majesty's writ; nor to make canons without his permission. This was called the Submission of the Clergy: the act, which was confirmed by authority of Parliament, enacted that all the canons should remain in force, that were not contrary to sacred scripture, nor the statutes of the realm, nor the king's supremacy, until a revisal should take place. No one ventured to raise his voice against the sovereign's will.

One event, that sheds peculiar lustre on Henry's reign, is too important to be passed over in silence: it is the translation of the Bible into the English tongue. This circumstance, of itself, is sufficient to stamp this period as one of the most memorable in English history. As long as the Scriptures, the fountain of light, were locked up in a dead language, the people could not emerge from the darkness of popery. This great work was completed in the year 1538; and a copy was ordered to be placed in all the churches of the kingdom at the expense of the respective parishes.

The interposition of Providence is manifest in all the proceedings connected with the divorce. Even after the sentence had been pronounced, there appeared a reasonable hope, through the intervention of the French ambassador, of a reconciliation with the pope. Henry was prevailed on

by the ambassador to delay the execution of his intended projects, provided his holiness would delay the sentence until the cause could be heard before unbiassed and impartial judges. On the arrival of the ambassador at Rome, a courier was despatched to England for the king's consent in writing; and a day was fixed for the return of the messenger. It happened that the courier did not arrive on the appointed day: the emperor's agents were clamorous for the pope to proceed to sentence: and though a delay of six days only was solicited by the ambassador, who attributed the non-arrival of the courier to the badness of the roads, or to some of those accidents attendant on long journeys, yet the pope declared the marriage lawful, and commanded Henry to receive Catharine as his wife. On the third day after the decision, the messenger arrived with full powers from the king to have the case adjudged, according to the proposition of the ambassador. Six years had the pope kept the king in suspense, and now lost England by refusing to grant a delay of six days. Had the messenger arrived at the appointed time, the Reformation might have been strangled in the birth. The haste of the pontiff secured to this country the blessings we enjoy: and the "vast fabric of ecclesiastical dominion, which had been raised with such art, and whose foundations seemed so deep, was overturned in a moment."*

It must be allowed that the character of the king had a considerable influence in preparing the way for the Reformation. Had his character been that of a mild and virtuous prince, the inhabitants of this isle might have been the deluded votaries of that debasing superstition which still broods over Spain and Portugal. Henry was not an individual to be trifled with on any subject, much less on one in which the gratification of his passions was concerned.

* Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 43.

The spell, by which England was bound, was dissolved by his touch. The principles on which the Reformation was based were recognised; and the Bible, and portions of the Liturgy in English, awakened in the breasts of the people a spirit of inquiry that could only be satisfied by additional light.

With regard to the question of the divorce, the scriptures, fathers, councils, canons, and universities, were in favour of the king. If, therefore, the marriage was illegal, he was at liberty to contract a new alliance. "The unkindness and slippery dealing of Clement with him," says Bishop Bedell, "was from the Lord, that he might have an occasion against the pope; and that it might appear that it was not human counsel, but Divine Providence, that brought about the banishment of the pope's tyranny from among us."

Henry's character has been assailed by all Catholic writers, who exultingly advert to the origin of the Reformation, alleging that a good work could never originate in the licentious passions of an unprincipled king. These writers take it for granted that Henry's passion for Anne Boleyn led him to desire a divorce from Catharine. The contrary, however, is the fact. The divorce had been agitated for a considerable period, and proceedings had been actually commenced, before Anne appeared at court. Though, therefore, his passion may have hastened the conclusion, it certainly was not the cause of the divorce. The king knew that many scruples were entertained relative to the validity of the marriage: he himself had consulted his favourite author, Thomas Aquinas, who denied the pope's power to dispense with the Divine law: and, under these circumstances, it is probable that he was influenced, in part at least, by scruples of conscience. It was on the ground, that the marriage was contracted in opposition to the express command of God, that Cranmer pronounced the sentence of separation.

Whatever may be alleged by the enemies of the Reformation, the pope would have granted the divorce, had he been uninfluenced by the emperor. But, admitting that the passion of the king for Anne Boleyn had commenced before the divorce was contemplated (a thing impossible, since Henry had not seen her when the proceedings were instituted), no valid objection could be offered to the Reformation, as we constantly find that the most exceptionable instruments are used to bring about beneficial ends.

The character of Henry the Eighth has been treated with extreme severity, even by Protestant writers. A favourable portrait cannot be drawn consistently with truth: still he was a man of vigorous character, of many accomplishments, and not without virtues. He was naturally frank and brave, but his passions were turbulent and his disposition arbitrary; and the long possession of despotic power produced its natural effects, in gradually destroying his original good qualities, and calling into activity every latent vice in his character.

CHAPTER II.

1547—1553.

EDWARD'S ACCESSION — PROGRESS OF REFORMATION — IMAGES REMOVED —
 COMMUNION SERVICE IN ENGLISH — PROHIBITION OF PREACHING — THE
 LITURGY — REVIEW OF LITURGY — ORDINATION SERVICE — ARTICLES OF
 RELIGION — DISPUTES ABOUT THE EPISCOPAL HABITS — HOOPER AND
 RIDLEY — ARRANGEMENT — INTERIM IN GERMANY — VIEWS OF THE
 REFORMERS IN MATTERS OF DISCIPLINE — DEATH OF THE KING —
 CRANMER.

EDWARD, the only son of Henry, by his favourite wife, Jane Seymour, succeeded his father in the throne ; he was a prince of pious feelings, of a most amiable disposition, and, considering his tender years, possessed of remarkable talents. From this time the Reformation was carried on with great vigour. The advances made in the preceding reign were slow and wavering : under the fostering care of Edward, and, directed by the skilful hand of Cranmer, the work proceeded very propitiously. The archbishop was now unfettered : in the former reign, his influence, though extensive, was weakened by his master's imperious and inconstant nature ; and, so far from being able to prosecute the work with zeal proportionate to its importance, the primate was compelled to act with wariness, lest by precipitating any particular measure, the whole cause might be endangered. On Edward's accession, all restraint was removed, and the archbishop was left at liberty to act in such a manner as in his own judgment was best, in the peculiar circumstances of the period.

The preservation of Cranmer through the late reign was almost miraculous. The machinations of his enemies were unceasing ; his conduct and motives were constantly misrepresented to Henry ; yet Cranmer, screened by an invisible hand, was preserved. It is remarkable, that the

attacks of the enemies of the Reformation rather advanced than retarded the work. Even the bull of excommunication, which was intended to involve the kingdom in inextricable difficulties, actually furthered the cause of the reformers, inasmuch as it irritated the king to adopt measures, which otherwise would not have been contemplated.

As soon as the council had leisure to consider the state of religion, they began to rectify some of the remaining abuses. The use of images was immediately prohibited; and in 1548 the communion service was prepared, sent to the bishops, and by them forwarded to the clergy, who received it without any remonstrances or opposition. It was objected by the secret favourers of the ancient system, that, in consequence of the extreme youth of the king, any alterations would be attended with danger, since he had neither the spirit nor the power of his father to carry his plans into execution.* The people, however, were so far prepared by the previous alterations, that they were desirous of a further reformation. Visitors were appointed by royal authority, to see that the ordinaries and ministers executed the order for the removal of images. Private individuals were restrained from interference, lest an indiscriminate attack should have been made not only on the images, but on tombs and sepulchral ornaments; but every thing that had been abused by superstitious worship was removed.

Though the communion service was received without opposition by the clergy, they did not fail, in their sermons, to instil prejudices into the minds of the people against the new system: it became necessary, therefore, for the council to act with decision; and, in order to counteract the evil of such a practice, all preaching was prohibited for a season, except under the authority of a license from

* Sir John Hayward, 289.

the Archbishop or the Lord Protector Somerset. By these precautionary measures, excesses were restrained, and the moderation and prudence of the early reformers operated as a check to the zeal of the priests.

The entire reformation of the Liturgy was next undertaken by the same committee that had been intrusted with the arrangement of the communion service. Much had been left to the discretion of the clergy, who, retaining their predilection for the old forms, slighted the new communion service. The reformers perceived that nothing would so effectually correct these irregularities as one uniform Liturgy; accordingly, Cranmer, Goodrich, Holbeach, Day, Skipp, Thirlby, Ridley, bishops; with Cox, Dean of Christ's Church; May, Dean of St. Paul's, and some others, immediately commenced a revision of the ancient offices. Prior to the Reformation, various offices were used, as those of Sarum, York, Hereford, Bangor, and Lincoln: these had originally been compiled by bishops of those sees. In the primitive church, the bishops were accustomed to compose Liturgies for the use of their people, after the manner, as is generally admitted, of the Apostles and first ministers of the church. Now, from the early Liturgies had been derived much of what was contained in the various offices in use at the period of the Reformation. These various offices were examined by the committee, the result of whose labours was an entire Liturgy, the first book of King Edward. The committee, by their instructions, were not authorised to reject the ancient books, but to revise them—to select what was excellent, to refuse what was otherwise. When the committee sat down to their labours, a proclamation was issued, prohibiting all persons from preaching till the new Liturgy should be completed. In a few months the work was finished, containing the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer, and the forms of Baptism, Confirmation, Matrimony, and the Burial of the Dead. The utmost prudence

was evinced throughout: rites and ceremonies were not rejected, unless they were innovations of a recent period, or had been abused in idolatrous worship. Nothing was rejected merely because it had been adopted in the church of Rome. It may be questioned, whether the world ever saw a body of uninspired men, whose proceedings, under very difficult circumstances, were more marked by caution, wisdom, and moderation, than those of the earliest reformers.

The Liturgy was approved by convocation, and, having received the sanction of Parliament, it was used in all the churches. In a few years, at the suggestion of Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr, and other foreign divines, the book was reviewed, and, at their instigation, several alterations were adopted. The first book commenced with the Lord's Prayer: * in the new book, the Sentences, Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution, were added; some few ceremonies, as the oil in baptism, and the unction of the sick, were retrenched; the prayers for the dead were also omitted; and a rubric was inserted in the communion service, declaring that no adoration was intended by the posture of kneeling. This rubric was omitted in the review of the services at Elizabeth's accession; but in 1662 it was restored, and still remains. Copes and other habits, heretofore used in the consecration of bishops, were also laid aside. These were the principal alterations; and, with some few exceptions, which will hereafter be noticed, the second book of Edward is the same as that at present used in the English church.

Martin Bucer, though he objected to the former book, declared, after this revision, that all things in the common service were clearly according to Scripture. Shortly after

* Hamon le Strange's Alliance of Divine Offices, p. 12. In this work are contained the two books of King Edward, together with all subsequent alterations up to the period of the Restoration.

the book was completed, the service for the ordination of priests and deacons, and that for the consecration of bishops, were arranged and set forth by authority. Poynel, Bishop of Rochester, was the first prelate consecrated according to the new service.

The attention of the reformers was next directed to the articles of religion. Confessions of faith had been published by all the Protestant churches on the Continent: they originated in the peculiar situation of the Protestants in Germany. As they were constantly misrepresented by their adversaries, they drew up a confession, in which all their views were embodied, and presented it to Charles V. at the diet of Augsburgh. Other churches, as they separated from Rome, adopted the same practice. Though the English reformers were not exposed to the same dangers as their brethren on the Continent, they, nevertheless, deemed it necessary to adopt some public system of doctrine,—not, indeed, for the purpose of refuting their opponents, but for the satisfaction of foreign churches. Accordingly, Ridley and some of his brethren prepared forty-two articles, in substance the same, though the number was reduced to thirty-nine, as those still retained by the church of England. A catechism for the instruction of youth was published also at the same time.

Though some of the ancient ceremonies were retained, the symbols of popery were destroyed in every direction. In some of the ancient churches, situated in secluded villages, where things remain often in the same state for ages, the vestiges of popery are still visible on the beams in the roof, and on the walls. In the church of Hemingford, a small village in the vicinity of Huntingdon, may still be seen, in the large and ancient black letter, the expression, “St. Peter, or St. Paul, pray for us,” shining through the coats of white-wash which, under the direction of the village churchwardens, have at various times been applied. Traces also of pictures

are sometimes to be discovered through the same partial covering. Such appearances would have struck terror into the breasts of the Puritans: they would have been attributed to the lukewarmness of the clergy in defacing superstitious monuments, and regarded as the presages of the re-establishment of Popery.

All these changes were effected without any open opposition: and of the whole body of the clergy, only one hundred and twenty-seven relinquished their livings from attachment to the Romish creed.

From the preceding statement it will be seen that the English reformers did not proceed to such lengths as their brethren on the Continent; and their prudence and moderation were fully acknowledged by the most distinguished of the German divines. Had an indiscriminate attack been commenced on the ancient ceremonies, it may be questioned whether the people would have submitted: in which case the cause might have been ruined. The advisers of Edward steered a middle course, between the gorgeous rites and superstitious observances of the church of Rome on the one hand, and the naked simplicity of the church of Geneva on the other. Things manifestly indifferent were retained, as tending to promote harmony and a devotional feeling among the people: while all unscriptural practices were abolished. Fuller quaintly remarks, that "to reform all at once had been the ready way to reform nothing at all: new wine must be gently poured into old bottles." It was Cranmer's object to proceed gradually to retrench acknowledged abuses in the outset, and submit matters of less importance to subsequent deliberations. Such a cautious mode of procedure was rendered necessary by the state of the clergy, who were secretly disaffected, notwithstanding their outward conformity. These men were generally monks, who had been expelled from the monasteries, and to whom a small pittance was awarded from the spoils of their property until

they were provided with benefices. As the occupiers of the abbey lands were generally courtiers, they succeeded in persuading the late king to bestow on these men the vacant livings. Hence, the churches, on Edward's accession, were almost universally occupied by men who, though they submitted to the government, were entirely devoted to the ancient superstition, and ready to seize the first opportunity of restoring the church to its former state.

The above remarks must be borne in mind, in order to account for the small number of the clergy who actually resigned their livings. The truth is, the great body of the clergy were disguised catholics, who only complied with the changes, in the hope of better times. On the face of such obstacles, it is surprising that Cranmer and his associates should have been able to effect so much during this short reign.

Hitherto we have related only those proceedings in which all the reformers were agreed. For a considerable period they acted in harmony, being all of one heart and one mind: but this peaceful state was destined to be of short continuance; it was soon interrupted by angry controversies relative to the use of the episcopal habits. Hooper was promoted by the youthful king to the see of Gloucester, but he positively refused to be consecrated in the habits enjoined in the new service, viewing them as badges of popery and relics of superstition. The utmost efforts of the council could not prevail upon him to use a garment which he deemed sinful. Cranmer and Ridley argued, that the vestments were indifferent, and, therefore, might lawfully be used: they alleged, that the previous abuse of these habits was no argument for their rejection, unless it could also be proved that it was sinful to use them; and that the same objection, if its force were admitted, might be brought against the use of the churches, which had been abused by superstitious worship. Bucer and Martyr declared in

favour of the habits. The latter condemned Hooper's conduct, asserting, that "his cause was by no means approved by the better sort of men." The former argued, that as the vestments had been used in the church before she became corrupted, they might be lawfully retained; and that their use would shew the people that the reformers were not disposed to reject any thing not manifestly sinful: he added, that "they sinned who refused to obey the laws in that particular."

After nine months spent in these disputes, the matter was compromised: Hooper consented to wear the episcopal vestments at his consecration and on public occasions; and Cranmer and the council permitted him to dispense with them at ordinary times. This was the first dispute in which the reformers were involved; and it was the revival of this feeling that originated the divisions at Frankfort, though, as will hereafter be seen, other disputes concerning ceremonies were superadded to those respecting the clerical habits. In the strife of these prelates, as Father Paul justly remarks, two nations were struggling in the womb. The very same matters were the cause of all the divisions between the episcopalians and the puritans at a later period.

As this controversy was followed by results so fatal to the peace of the church, it may be desirable to glance at the origin of Hooper's scruples. During the latter part of the preceding reign, Hooper, to avoid the operation of the law of the Six Articles, had resided on the Continent. At that time all Germany was in a state of agitation, in consequence of the controversy relative to things indifferent in public worship.* This dispute had its rise in that scheme of worship devised by the Emperor Charles V., and designated the *Interim*. This appellation was given, because the plan prescribed only temporary regulations to continue in

* Neal, vol. i. p. 67.

force till all things should be settled by a general council.* It was framed by moderate catholics, with the addition of one or more protestants. Neither catholics nor protestants were satisfied with the emperor's scheme: to the former it was odious, as emanating from a layman; to the latter, as containing all the Romish doctrines. At Rome the ecclesiastics were amazed: they expected that the whole of Germany would be separated from the Romish see. The pope, however, wiser than his brethren, had no such apprehensions: he saw that it would please neither party; that it would cause divisions among the protestants, and eventually prove injurious to the emperor: he consented, therefore, that it should be published. The pope's predictions were verified,—neither party was satisfied, and the protestants were divided. In those protestant cities where the emperor's influence was powerful, the *Interim* was received. It was argued, that the things enjoined were indifferent, and that it was lawful—yea, necessary, to tolerate some things in obedience to the Emperor. In other cities not under the dominion of Charles, an opposite opinion was held: hence, as Father Paul remarks, “arose two sects, which were never well reconciled.”

Hooper coincided in the view of those who refused to receive the *Interim*. To this scheme may be attributed all the subsequent distractions among protestants. Hence, the disputes concerning the episcopal habits,—the first that divided the English reformers.

The English reformers did not contend for any system of government or discipline in the church, as being *jure Divino*; things indifferent, as ceremonies and the clerical habits, were left to the civil magistrates. Nor did they refuse to recognise the validity of ordination in those foreign churches

* Father Paul's History of Council of Trent, Ed. 1676, p. 271.

that had renounced episcopacy. But this subject will fall under our notice at a later period in the reign of Elizabeth; for those disputes were soon, for a season, forgotten, in consequence of the king's health. The reformers were drawn off from their divisions to contemplate the prospect that awaited them in the event of the death of Edward. The common safety was their principal anxiety, and not disputes concerning matters of minor importance. At length, after many alternations of hope and fear, the blow fell with all its weight upon the church; for the king died in 1553, leaving the cause of the reformation in a state of peculiar peril.

It will be seen from the foregoing statement, that the most remarkable and the most influential individual of this reign was Cranmer. His memory, however, is loaded with reproaches by his enemies. It is constantly objected against him, that he was a persecutor, and that he practised towards others what he deprecated when directed towards himself. That he persecuted, cannot be denied; but in that age, the lawfulness of persecution was admitted. The blots in his character are to be attributed to the principles of the times, and to the infirmity of human nature,—not to a cruel or uncharitable disposition. Cranmer was not suddenly emancipated from the thralldom of principles imbibed with his earliest breath: but surely, if blame rests upon the archbishop, it must be placed to the account of the church of Rome, from which Cranmer derived his sentiments, and not to the church of England, then in her infancy, and engaged in a struggle even for existence. When the character of the times, the principles of the age, and the numerous difficulties by which he was surrounded, are properly considered, it will be admitted by unprejudiced persons, that few men in Cranmer's situation could have acted with more tenderness and forbearance. At all events, there

is not any one individual to whom the English church is more deeply indebted, than to her first metropolitan. The hand of charity will cast a veil over those blemishes in his character which it is the duty of the historian faithfully to record.

CHAPTER III.

1553—1558.

PROSPECTS OF THE REFORMERS—MARY'S ACCESSION—RESTORATION OF
POPERY—PERSECUTIONS—SILENT PROGRESS OF THE PRINCIPLES OF
THE REFORMATION—QUEEN'S DEATH—POLICY OF THE ROMISH CHURCH
—DIVISIONS AMONG THE EXILES IN GERMANY.

THE death of Edward was the signal to the advocates of the Romish see to attempt the recovery of their lost influence. It was an event by which the hopes of the reformers were extinguished; since, in his sister Mary, they saw only cruelty and bigotry. The prospect was a dismal one;—persecution or banishment, and the certain ruin of their cause, were presented to their view. The light that had been enjoyed for the last few years, and by which the minds of the reformers had been cheered, was again obscured by those clouds of error, which, from the seventh century, had covered the land. There had indeed been, even during the dark ages of the church, occasional flashes of light; but they served only to render the darkness more visible to those whose minds were at all enlightened. The death of Edward, as it elevated Mary to the throne, was a severe blow to the reformers.

It is foreign to the object of this work to notice the brief but tragical history of Jane Grey. No sooner was Mary seated on the throne, than all her father's and brother's laws relative to the church, though not yet repealed, were disre-

garded by the priests. However, on the meeting of her first parliament, these laws were abrogated, and every thing was restored to the state in which it formerly stood. Not only was the authority of the pope recognised, but the queen soon evinced a disposition to persecute those who had been instrumental in the reformation. Cranmer, Ridley, and Hooper, were ere long brought to the stake, and their differences were for ever buried in the ashes of their own bodies. Not less than 288 persons, according to the accurate Strype, were called, during this reign, to seal the truth of the doctrines of the reformation with their blood; while vast numbers were compelled to seek in exile that liberty which was denied them in their own country.

Still the new doctrines continued to gain ground. Those who had renounced the errors of popery were more confirmed in their principles by the sufferings of the martyrs, than by the most powerful argumentation. The patient endurance of torture and death by those who were doomed to suffer, was to surviving and wavering protestants a convincing proof that the new doctrines were founded on the Bible, or their advocates could never have been supported under such cruelties. The finger of Providence, no less than during the reign of Henry, was signally displayed in the short-sighted policy of Mary in persecuting the reformers: for the cruelties exercised on the sufferers tended to facilitate the progress of the reformation in the succeeding reign. The people, who hitherto had been somewhat indifferent, were now so horror-struck with Mary's proceedings, that their indifference was converted into the most deeply rooted hatred to popery. Even at the revolution, the recollection of Mary's cruelties had a considerable influence in moving the people to discountenance James's attempts to introduce popery. The death of the martyrs, therefore, was not the ruin of their cause. Like Sampson, Cranmer and his companions in suffering conferred more service on the cause of protestantism, and inflicted

more injury on that of their opponents by their death, than they had ever been able to effect during their lives. In 1558 these violent proceedings were suddenly checked by the unlamented death of the queen, after a short, but cruel reign of five years and four months. During her short reign she used her utmost endeavours to restore popery to its pristine vigour : her father's memory was reproached : and to prevent that scandal which had been reflected on the church of Rome, in consequence of the immoralities discovered by the visitors in suppressing the religious houses in the reign of Henry, she did not hesitate to destroy the returns of the commission.

Though the reformation, in the preceding reign, was opposed by only seven or eight of the peers, the whole body were reconciled to popery on the accession of Mary. The commons also supported the queen. It is not surprising, however, that the lower house fell in with the views of the court ; for in those days the elections were principally managed by the government. Popery seems to have been permitted to return for a short season, for the purpose of discovering its real nature. At this time the people were anxious for inquiry : their attachment to the ancient creed was weakened, and Mary's cruelties caused the people to view the reformers with a favourable eye.

Never was the policy of the church of Rome in adapting itself to times and circumstances more conspicuously displayed, than during this short reign. A striking instance of that policy is found in the remarkable fact, that the clergy ordained in the previous reign according to the new service, were not, on their manifesting a willingness to comply, re-ordained. From the period of Elizabeth, the validity of the orders conferred by the English church has never been recognised by that of Rome ; though the orders conferred under Edward, in the case of those who complied, were never questioned ; but when the object was to add a pang to

the bitterness of the death of a protestant martyr, the Romish church acted on its old principles, that orders conferred in schism were invalid. Thus Cranmer, who had received all his orders from Rome, was degraded from the sacred office; while Hooper and Ridley, who had been consecrated bishops according to the new service, were not subjected to degradation, their consecration being treated as a nullity.

Before we enter on the reign of Elizabeth, it will be proper to notice those divisions among the English protestants, which, breaking out at Frankfort, proved at a later period the ruin of the English church. On Mary's accession, many English protestants fled to the Continent, in order to save their lives. Some fixed themselves at Geneva, some at Zurick, some at Strasburgh, and others at Frankfort. On their arrival in their places of abode, they united together in admiring the goodness of God, in opening a door for their reception in a foreign land, when no resting-place could be afforded them in their own country. For a time they lived in peace and harmony; but ere long the seeds of discord were sown, which soon produced an open rupture. As the controversy respecting the ceremonies had its commencement in the divisions at Frankfort, the origin and progress of those differences must now be detailed.

The only account of the differences among the exiles is an anonymous pamphlet, published in 1575, by one of the parties, and entitled, "A Discourse of the Troubles at Frankfort." All that has since been written on the subject on both sides, is derived from this source. Though the writer discovers a leaning in some things to the views of the dissenting party, it is upon the whole fairly and impartially written. The account of these troubles which we now proceed to lay before the reader, is drawn from the pamphlet itself.

It has already been observed, that the English exiles took up their abode in different cities in Germany. Some of them

repaired to Frankfort, where the French exiles had obtained from the magistrates the use of a church for the performance of divine service. In a short time the use of the same church was granted on different hours to the English exiles, on the condition that they should not dissent from the French either in doctrine or ceremonies, lest occasion of strife should be ministered. It was also requested that they should subscribe to the French Confession of Faith. The exiles, grateful for these favours, began to deliberate on the mode of worship to be observed; for this point had been left to themselves by the magistrates, who stated that they were under no obligation to use the ceremonies of the French church, but that it would be sufficient to adopt such a scheme as should not be disallowed by the French exiles. The English service was accordingly perused, when it was determined to omit the responses, the use of the surplice, and a few other things, that no offence might be given to the French. Having settled the mode of conducting public worship, they appointed a minister and deacons for a time.*

Having obtained the favour of a church from the magistrates, the exiles in Frankfort communicated the pleasing intelligence to their brethren in Strasburgh, Geneva, and Zurick. The brethren in Zurick replied, that they were ready to repair to Frankfort, provided they might be permitted to "serve and praise God as freely as the order last taken in the church of England permitteth and prescribeth; for we are fully determined to admit and use no other."† In the mean time, as the other exiles in other cities coincided in the views of their brethren at Zurick, John Knox was invited to take the pastoral charge of the church at Frankfort. The residents at Strasburgh insisted on the use of King Edward's book, "lest, say they, by much altering of the same, we should seem to condemn the chief authors thereof, who, as

* Troubles of Frankfort in Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 55.

† Ibid. p. 55.

they now suffer, so are they most ready to confirm that fact with the price of their bloods; and should also both give occasion to our adversaries to accuse our doctrine of imperfection, and us of mutability, and the godly to doubt of that truth wherein before they were persuaded." Grindal, who went to Frankfort on the part of his brethren at Strasburgh, entered into a further explanation of their views, assuring his fellow exiles that they were not anxious about every ceremony, provided the substance of the book was retained. To the letter from Strasburgh it was replied, that "as for certain ceremonies, which the order of the country will not bear, we necessarily admit with as little alteration as is possible, so that no adversary is so impudent that dare either blame our doctrine of imperfection, or us of mutability. Neither do we dissent from them which lie at the ransom of their bloods, for the doctrine whereof they have made a most worthy confession."*

As the use of King Edward's book was not guaranteed, the brethren in Strasburgh hesitated to remove to Frankfort. When it was proposed that the mode of worship should be settled, some advocated the order of Geneva: but Knox objected to any settlement until the learned men in the other cities should have been consulted. During these discussions the English liturgy was used in part only. In this emergency it was agreed that Calvin's advice should be solicited; and to enable him to come to a decision, Knox and Whittingham wrote a description of the service book in Latin. This description was not an impartial one: a simple translation would have been better. Calvin was not left to form his own judgment from the liturgy itself; but whenever a ceremony, or a rubric, or a prayer, is mentioned, their own comments are also given. After having described various points in the liturgy, they remark, "besides, there are yet

* Troubles, &c. vol. ii. p. 61.

in use certain suffrages devised of Pope Gregory, which begin after this manner, 'O God the Father of heaven,' only leaving out the invocation of saints; otherwise we use a certain conjuring of God, by the mystery of his incarnation, by his holy nativity, &c."* This extract is sufficient to destroy the character of Knox and Whittingham for impartiality in the description. Had they acted in a candid and sincere manner, they would have simply stated facts, leaving Calvin to form his own conclusions. Similar instances occur in other portions of the description. Still, notwithstanding their attempts to bias Calvin's judgment, his opinion, though he himself was disinclined to view the ceremonies with a favourable eye, was not altogether such as the brethren at Frankfort could have desired. He replied, that in the Liturgy he saw some "tolerable foolish things," intimating by that expression that, though he did not approve of them, they were not sinful, and consequently might be endured.

On the receiving of Calvin's answer, Knox, Whittingham, Gilby, Fox, and Cole, were requested to draw up a form of worship suited to their circumstances. They fixed on the order of Geneva; but some of their brethren objecting, their proposal was rejected. Knox, Whittingham, Parry, and Lever, were then requested to devise some mode that should, if possible, put an end to their present strife. After many conferences, they agreed to use a portion of the English book, with some additions of their own. This order was settled February 6th, 1555, and was to continue in force until the ensuing April. If in the intervening space any discussion should arise, it was agreed that the matter in dispute should be determined by Calvin, Musculus, Balingier, Martyr, and Vyrel.

The business appeared now to be settled; but on March 13th, Cox arrived from England, and attending divine

* Troubles, &c. p. 65.

service on the following sabbath, he repeated the responses aloud after the officiating minister, according to the English practice. When the brethren remonstrated with him, declaring that he had disturbed the harmony subsisting among them, he argued that it was necessary to maintain the face of an English church. On the Sunday following, one of Cox's party occupied the pulpit, and read the litany, which had been disused by the framers of the new order. A sharp discussion ensued, during which it was agreed that Cox and his friends, who had just arrived from England, should be admitted to a voice in the congregation. It now appeared that the advocates of the king's book, being strengthened by the accession of Cox and his friends, formed a majority in the assembly. This majority immediately prohibited Knox from any further interference with the congregation.

An appeal was next made to the magistrates, who decided as before, that they should conform to the practice of the French in doctrine and ceremonies.

Knox, in his "Admonition," had spoken harshly of the emperor. The objectionable passages were pointed out to the magistrates, who, fearful of incurring the emperor's displeasure, ordered Knox to quit the city, lest they should be required to deliver him up. Cox and his friends, being now the majority, prevailed with the magistrates to permit the free and full use of the English liturgy; and, in consequence of their decision, Whittingham, Fox, Cole, and others, separated from their brethren and repaired to Geneva. Here they adopted the order of that church. After debating the question, whether they should use as much of the English service as they could approve, or comply with Calvin's model, they embraced the latter alternative.

The preceding statement is drawn from the only authentic account of the divisions on the Continent. It has been shewn that the reformers in Edward's reign were not

altogether agreed on some unimportant points. Hooper scrupled to wear the episcopal habits, and Rogers the square cap; yet, after Hooper's submission, all grounds of difference appeared to be removed: the reformers concurred in merging minor differences for the sake of union. When the exiles departed from England, they were all agreed as to the use of the liturgy: the controversy was not carried with them, but originated in the mode of worship adopted by the German reformers. The principal reason adduced by the Frankfort exiles against the use of the liturgy was the disapprobation of the magistrates; yet when the magistrates authorised the use of the service book, Whittingham and his friends refused to comply. From a letter of Bale, it appears that the same disputes arose among those exiles who fixed themselves at Basil. "When," says Bale, "we require to have common prayers, according to our English order, they tell us that the magistrates will in no case suffer it; which is a most manifest lie. They mock the rehearsal of God's commandments, and of the Epistles and Gospels, and say they are misplaced. They blaspheme our communion, calling it a popish mass; and say that it hath a popish face, with other fierce despisings."

These dissensions are the more to be deplored, as they originated in differences of opinion not regarding doctrines, but matters of discipline. The points at issue were mere trifles, yet how destructive were the consequences. These divisions, becoming more violent by the heat of party rage, eventually involved the Church of England in ruin. At the period of Hooper's consecrations the habits only were disliked; at Frankfort the ceremonies were impugned. Every succeeding year widened the breach, till at length the parties were irreconcilable.

It was distressing to the lovers of peace to witness these contests: both parties admitted that the points at issue

were not essentials. Calvin himself recommended compliance for the sake of peace. Cox and his party argued that, while their brethren in England were sealing the truth with their blood, it ill became them, at such a moment, to raise doubts relative to the lawfulness of that liturgy, which had been adopted by all alike before the death of Edward. Though, however, the disputed points were confessedly of little consequence, the exiles manifested as much anxiety as if their common faith had been endangered. As, however, all had used the liturgy at home, and as their countrymen were now suffering in its defence, it was certainly desirable that it should not be laid aside in their exile. Had all the brethren concurred in its use, the dissensions, by which the harmony of the reformers was disturbed, would not have sprung up. It is melancholy to look back upon this quarrel, as in it was the seed of all the subsequent distractions.

CHAPTER IV.

1558—1570.

ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH—PRUDENT MEASURES OF THE QUEEN—REVIEW OF EDWARD'S BOOK—PROHIBITION OF PREACHING FOR A TIME—DEFENCE OF THE QUEEN—OPINIONS OF THE QUEEN—ACT OF UNIFORMITY—SUPREMACY—PARKER ELEVATED TO THE SEE OF CANTERBURY—OTHER SEES FILLED—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REFORMATION—EXCESSES RESTRAINED—SAD RECOLLECTION OF THE REFORMERS—REVIVAL OF THE DIFFERENCES—ORIGIN OF THE TERM PURITAN—EFFORT TO ENFORCE CONFORMITY—LENITY TOWARDS THE PURITANS—THEIR VIEWS ON SEPARATION—ARTICLES—HOMILIES—GENTLE MEASURES—THE FIRST SEPARATION—RISE OF PRESBYTERY—MODERATE AND VIOLENT PURITANS—INTRIGUES OF THE PAPISTS—FAITHFUL COMMUNION AND HEATH, TWO JESUITS—EXCOMMUNICATION OF THE QUEEN.

WHILE the hopes of the catholics were extinguished by the queen's death, those of the reformers were suddenly revived. The cloud that had shrouded the reformation was dispersed; and again were the darkness and superstitions of popery chased away by the light of truth. Elizabeth was quietly seated on the vacant throne: as she had been exposed to much severity in consequence of her attachment to the reformation, her joy was equal to that of her subjects. The queen's accession was the signal for the exiles to return; and as they were viewed by Elizabeth as fellow-sufferers in the same cause with herself, they were received with much kindness.

Popery had been re-established by Mary. As the queen's situation was one of peculiar difficulty, no change was immediately effected. This caution was rendered necessary by circumstances: the want of it might have endangered the throne, and proved the ruin of the protestant faith. Precipitation on her part in effecting a change in the esta-

blished order, would have rallied her catholic subjects and placed her throne in jeopardy. Any sudden change would have called forth the bull of excommunication, which, though not dreaded by the queen, it was, nevertheless, desirable to delay until measures of safety could be concerted. The priests, therefore, continued to celebrate mass as usual.

In a very short time, however, several learned divines were appointed to review King Edward's service book; but all changes were prohibited until authorised by due course of law. As a preliminary measure, the liturgy, the creed, and the Lord's prayer, were ordered to be read in English. In 1559, the divines, to whom the review of the liturgy had been entrusted, completed their task. Parker, Grindall, Cox, Pilkington, May, Bill, Whitehead, and Sir Thomas Smith, were the individuals to whom the work was committed. Few alterations were made. One expression in the liturgy, "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities, good Lord deliver us," was struck out; and the rubric, in which it was declared that no adoration was intended by the posture of kneeling in the sacrament, was expunged. The place in which prayers should be read was now left to the discretion of the ordinary: in the time of Edward, the service was read in the chancel. Proper first lessons for Sundays were now fixed; and the prayer for the queen, that for the clergy and people, as well as that commencing with "O Lord, whose nature and property," &c. were added at this review. The book, thus revised, was submitted to the parliament, which ordained that it should take effect from the 24th June, 1559.

By such a gradual process was the change effected. No sudden measures were adopted. A month elapsed, after the death of Mary, before the decalogue, the creed, and the liturgy were permitted in English; and to prevent

disputes all preaching was prohibited, except under a license from the great seal. At a later period a violent outcry was raised against the injunction prohibiting all preaching. A more prudent step, however, could not, under the peculiar circumstances of the times, have been taken by the queen's advisers. Those, whose sentiments were fully known, experienced no difficulty in obtaining a license; and, though some of the protestant advocates were restrained, ultimate advantages were secured. Had there been no restrictions laid upon the clergy, the catholics would have used the pulpit as a vehicle for conveying the poison of their doctrines to the people.

Edward had resorted to the same expedient in the earlier portion of his reign; but the memory of both Edward and Elizabeth was, in consequence of the prohibition of preaching, loaded with reproach by the puritans. They asserted, especially of Elizabeth, that by suppressing preaching she opposed the spread of true religion. On the queen's accession numbers of the clergy, indeed, almost all of them, were secretly favourers of the ancient practices; nor was it possible to find others to occupy their places. Complying with the alterations, they retained their livings: but to prevent them from doing mischief, preaching was restrained, and the homilies composed by the reformers were appointed to be read. These restrictions, so far from checking, were the chief cause of the rapid advances of the reformation; and so far was the queen from wishing to restrain preaching, that many laymen of orthodox principles were admitted to orders, or even permitted to preach as laymen. John Tavernier, a layman, was permitted by King Edward to preach in any part of the country. So great was the scarcity of preachers, that the king's chaplains were compelled to ride post about the land to preach against popery. Tavernier even preached before the king. The same practice was permitted by Elizabeth; and Tavernier, during her reign,

actually appeared in the pulpit of St. Mary's Church, Oxon.*

It is insinuated by many writers, even in the present day, that because Edward and Elizabeth were, from their peculiar circumstances, under the necessity of imposing a restraint on the pulpit, they incurred the guilt of withholding from the people the bread of life. It ought, in justice to the memory of those sovereigns, to be stated, that, when the cause no longer existed, the restriction was removed. It was safer and wiser to prohibit preaching, than to allow the clergy to exercise their own discretion. Had the order even been as sinful as it was reasonable, the Church of England, at all events, would be undeserving of censure; for the act was the act of the sovereign, not of the church.

It appears that Elizabeth was willing to retain some of the ceremonies rejected by the reformers. Her opinion was that her brother's zeal had carried him further than was necessary. In these matters, however, she acted as a wise princess, and yielded to the judgment of the council.

As soon as the Act of Uniformity had received the royal assent, that of supremacy was passed by the parliament. When tendered to the bishops and clergy, nearly all the prelates, though they had taken the same oath under Henry, and had complied with all the changes of that reign, refused, and were afterwards deprived of their sees. The next step was to fill the vacant sees with men of learning and piety. Parker was nominated to the see of Canterbury, which for a considerable time he persisted in refusing, imploring the queen to select an abler and more experienced person for that important post. He at length yielded to the repeated importunities of the queen. The other sees were filled by men of a kindred spirit: many of them had been exiles,

* Wood's Ath. Ox., vol i. p. 182.

and all had been sufferers in the cause of the reformation. Among the individuals on whom the episcopal dignity was conferred, were Grindal, Cox, Parkhurst, Sandys, and Jewel; the last ever to be remembered for his elaborate defence of the English Church.

Parker was consecrated by the three surviving bishops of Edward's reign, Barlow, Scory, and Coverdale. The fable of the Nag's Head Ordination cannot be noticed in this work.* Though fourteen bishops adhered to their former principles, very few of the clergy refused to comply with the Act of Uniformity. At that period there were 9400 benefices in England; but the whole number of the clergy who relinquished their posts on account of their religious scruples, were six abbots, twelve deans, twelve archdeacons, fifteen heads of colleges, fifty prebendaries, and eighty rectors. All who conformed retained their livings; nor would it have been possible to have supplied the wants of the people, had there been a very large secession from among the clergy. These first incumbents were secretly attached to popery; but as this generation passed away, individuals of an opposite character were appointed to succeed them. To supply some of the vacancies that necessarily occurred, several laymen, of sound principles though of slender acquirements, were ordained.†

The reformation was now re-established; the liturgy was set forth by authority; the vacant sees were filled by eminent protestants; and the clergy, whatever were their secret views, conformed to the new system. The images restored by Mary's zeal were removed; and visitors were appointed to examine into the state of the churches, who, according to Strype, performed their duty with remarkable

* For the particulars of Parker's consecration, see *Complete History*, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 659. See also Courayer's *Defence of the Validity of the English Ordinations*.

† Strype.

diligence, by destroying all superstitious and idolatrous monuments. During the ascendancy of popery, altars were erected in all the churches: they were now removed, and tables, for the celebration of the holy communion, were set up at the expense of the respective parishes. There were still some excesses committed by the people, whom it was found difficult to restrain. Not only were roods, crucifixes, and images, destroyed, but, in some places, books, surplices, and sepulchral ornaments, were committed to the flames, as vestiges of superstition. The painted windows in churches were, in some instances, demolished; on which account a proclamation was issued, prohibiting, under certain penalties, the defacing of tombs, and the breaking of windows in churches. In some cases even the zeal of the visitors themselves outstripped their prudence. Cox and his fellow-visitors in the University of Oxford, in their zeal against popish ornaments, destroyed the illuminated figures of the manuscripts in the public library. These figures were mistaken for popish saints, whereas they were nothing more than the heads of British kings. Not only were the figures destroyed, but many of the manuscripts also. Of those formerly belonging to the library of Duke Humphrey, one only remains at present, the rest having fallen a sacrifice to the ardour of the visitors. Indeed, in some few parishes the bells even were taken down by the parochial authorities. All these excesses were, however, restrained by authority.

These excesses were few when compared with the proceedings of the reformers on the continent and in Scotland. In England the reformation was effected by the authority of the government; on the continent and in Scotland by popular violence. Changes effected by the people are seldom unattended by popular commotions. In accomplishing any important change, the people are almost always hurried to extremes: not submitting to the guidance of

reason, but generally influenced by some powerful leader, they are not easily restrained within the bounds of moderation. In Germany and Scotland, where the people were the prime movers, many things occurred which wise and prudent men must condemn.*

Amid the proceedings of the reformers, there was one subject on which they dwelt with sorrow,—it was the dismal tale of the loss of their brethren in the preceding reign: many martyrs had gone to receive their crown, while their frail bodies were undistinguished from the ashes of the fire. The recollection of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and Hooper, could not be effaced. With them they had taken sweet counsel during the first reformation: but regret for their loss was mingled with gratitude to God for their constancy at the stake. The feelings of Parker, on succeeding to the see of Canterbury, must have been peculiar. With Cranmer he had been associated in compiling the liturgy and articles: Cranmer was gone to his rest, while he remained. Though Parker had not gone into exile, he was not exempt from suffering: at the risk of his life, he travelled from place to place, under various disguises, to encourage the remnant of the persecuted protestants.

Well would it have been for the interests of religion, if the dissensions of Frankfort had never been revived. It would have been reasonable to expect, that gratitude for their signal deliverance from the grasp of a tyrannical superstition, would have caused the exiles to merge their differences in oblivion; but the divisions that had originated abroad were fomented at home with the same bitterness with which they had been cherished on the continent. Had the exiles yielded to the liturgy and ceremonies, the peace of the church would have been unbroken. Such a happy

* Calvin admitted that he was compelled by the current of popular prejudice to reject some long-retained usages of which his judgment approved.

termination, however, was not destined to take place; but those who had been brethren in exile for the same cause, sharers in the same sufferings, as well as contenders for the same pure faith, were, on their return, rent asunder by a controversy respecting some few points of confessedly minor importance. No sooner was the liturgy established by the Act of Uniformity, than the unhappy divisions of Frankfort were revived with all the acrimony by which they had been marked in their origin. Though all the exiles had used the liturgy in Edward's reign, many now advocated a nearer approximation to the Geneva discipline. The majority quietly complied; but the peace of the church was sadly disturbed by the opposition of the dissentients. They contended for what they termed a further reformation and a purer discipline, and hence originated the distinctive appellation of *Puritan*. Some of the bishops would have proceeded somewhat further in the work, had they been authorised to decide on what ceremonies should be retained or rejected; but viewing the disputed points as matters of indifference, they chose to sacrifice their own peculiar views for the good of the church. Had every individual been at liberty to object to whatever he disliked, it is clear that a settlement could never have been effected. The majority, therefore, of the reformers hesitated not to yield to the queen and her council. The merit of suffering in exile with their protestant brethren is readily granted to the early puritans: their piety and learning were also unquestionable; but we may fairly entertain a doubt as to their prudence in interrupting the harmony of the church, at a period when the sword of persecution had just been sheathed, for the sake of a few usages, which, however unpleasing to their taste, were not, even by the most strenuous advocates of a purer reformation, at least, in that early day, deemed sinful.

It will now be necessary to trace the proceedings of the

government, during this reign, against those who refused to conform; and, notwithstanding the strong assertions to the contrary, we shall prove that the number of those who were actually deprived was very insignificant. It is admitted, that many refused to comply until proceedings were adopted to enforce conformity; but when they discovered that compliance or resignation was necessary, they yielded.* Their principles, at this period, were opposed to separation from the established church: they disliked some of the ceremonies, and evaded them as long as possible; but when an attempt was made to enforce the authority of the law, they considered it to be their duty to comply. The Brownists and real separatists did not spring up till a subsequent period of this reign.

When these controversies arose, both parties, as also was the case during the subsequent reigns, were strenuous advocates for an Act of Uniformity, and equally averse to a general toleration. All concurred in the belief, that conformity should be enforced by the sword of the civil power; and the question at issue between them regarded only the system to be established. In matters of faith there was no difference of opinion: all admitted that the scriptures were a perfect rule of faith; but while, on the one hand, the bishops contended that no precise scheme of government was enjoined by the word of God, and that the discipline of the church was left to the civil magistrate, to order according to the various circumstances of the countries in which Christianity should be planted; the puritans, on the other, asserted that the scriptures were not only a standard of faith but of discipline. The ceremonies, therefore, were the sole cause of dispute. The puritans did not pause to

* Calvin's advice to the exiles was to conform, rather than disturb the peace of the church. When conformity was pressed upon Whittingham, he complied, alleging that Calvin had recommended them not to neglect their ministry for the sake of a few ceremonies.

ascertain whether the objectionable rites were in themselves innocent,—whether they were recent innovations, or whether they were recommended by the practice of the church in the earlier ages of Christianity : with them, their adoption in the church of Rome was a sufficient cause of their rejection. If the clerical habits and some of the ceremonies were worthy of rejection solely on account of having been used in the church of Rome, every article of apparel even must have been renounced, as having been worn by the priests of that church.

The difficulties with which the queen had to contend in placing the reformation on a firm basis, were not sufficiently considered by the puritans. No regard was paid to the state of religion under Edward ; nor any allowance made for the feelings of the opposite party, who constituted a large majority, and who, since they had witnessed the constancy of the martyrs, had become still more attached to the liturgy. None but a vigorous sovereign could have surmounted the dangers by which the throne was surrounded. The safety of the government was threatened by the priests at home and by the pope abroad. Many of the former were ready to engage in attempts not only against the peace of the country, but also against the person of the queen ; and the latter was preparing to fulminate against her the bull of excommunication. Her cautious measures induced the pope to pause, in the hope of her reconciliation to the Romish see. During the space of eleven years was the blow warded off by the prudence of the queen ; and when it actually fell, it was scarcely felt ; whereas the consequences might have been serious, had it been inflicted at the commencement of her reign, before her power was consolidated. Fortunately for the country, the sovereigns of France and Spain were engaged in hostilities, or a combination might have been formed, sufficient to have menaced the throne with destruction.

In all her measures the queen was vigorously supported by the parliament. It is not one of the least striking features in the character of those times, that the parliament should, under Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, sanction the changes recommended by the sovereign.

In 1562, the articles of religion were approved by the convocation. The forty-two articles of Edward, compiled by Cranmer and Ridley, were now reduced to thirty-nine. The book of homilies was also set forth at the same time; but the articles did not receive the sanction of parliamentary authority until the year 1571, when they were reviewed by the convocation. The queen's lofty notions of the prerogative rendered her jealous of parliamentary interference. The articles, therefore, were for nine years unsanctioned by the legislature, the queen wishing to impose them upon the church by her own authority.

As soon as Elizabeth was quietly seated on the throne, she was not unmindful of the disputes by which her protestant subjects were divided. She had sacrificed her own predilection for some of the pompous ceremonials of the church of Rome; and she did not deem it unreasonable that the puritans should be requested to yield in minor matters for the general good of the church. For several years the most gentle and persuasive means were adopted to win them over to conformity. Those who refused were generally permitted to remain unmolested, or at all events were not subjected to the penalty of deprivation; and during the earlier portion of her reign they generally complied, when enjoined by authority. Fox and others refused to subscribe the articles; still they were suffered to retain their stations. Sampson, Lever, and Coverdale, refused to officiate in the habits, but they still retained their preferments. Strype, in his "Life of Grindal," states, that down to the year 1564 uniformity was neglected, and that not a few avoided the use of the ceremonies. During that year conformity was

pressed with more rigour; still very few were suspended from the exercise of the ministry, while scarcely any were deprived. When, however, the puritans continued in their nonconformity, Parker and his brethren were compelled to resort to measures of greater severity. Hence various injunctions were, from time to time, issued, requiring all the clergy to comply with the Book of Common Prayer according to the Act of Uniformity. In some cases, where the objections of the clergy extended to a few things only, their nonconformity was connived at; and to others an indulgence was granted to dispense with some of the ceremonies. Fox was permitted to dispense with the use of the surplice, a circumstance corroborative of our assertions respecting the lenity of the government. The peaceable nonconformists were treated with gentleness; and if not licensed to evade some of the ceremonies, were connived at.* All who conformed occasionally, though not generally, were treated with favour. And this treatment had a salutary effect on the more moderate amongst them; for in 1565, when the London clergy were questioned by Parker, few were deprived, the majority complying before the expiration of the three months allowed by the archbishop.†

About the year 1566, the puritans held a consultation respecting the lawfulness of separation from the established church. Some of them decided that separation was lawful; but previous to this year no separation had been contemplated. "Here was the first era or date of the separation."‡ After debating whether they should use a portion of the English service, or adopt the Geneva discipline altogether, they determined to resort to the latter alternative. It is remarked by Neal, that if the habits and a few of the ceremonies had been left indifferent, the people had been easy. Whether

* Strype's Life of Parker, p. 243.

† Strype's Annals, p. 462.

‡ Neal's Puritans, vol. i. p. 230.

such a result would have followed is very questionable. The separatists, however, were few in number, for the majority even of the puritans preferred conformity to separation, deeming it unlawful to separate from a church where the word and the sacraments were properly administered.

It is stated by some of the advocates of the puritans, that they were so numerous, that, unless many had conformed, the church must have gone back to popery. This statement is too broad; but it is true, that if Grindall and others who entertained some slight objections to a few of the ceremonies, had not laid aside their scruples, the queen would have experienced much difficulty in filling up the vacant sees with persons duly qualified. Had the puritans acted on the same principles, the unity of the church would not have been broken.

The leaders of the separation were six or seven ministers of the diocese of London. In 1567, one of their secret assemblies was discovered at Plummer's Hall, and several of their party were committed to prison, where they remained until the following year, when they were liberated by order of the council. These were the first who met for separate worship in any considerable number: at this period, indeed, no separate assembly existed out of London. Subsequent to the time above mentioned, uniformity was more strictly enjoined; but even after this period the real separatists were comparatively few. Though inconsiderable in number, however, they fomented a division in the church which was never healed. It appears that the members of the separation were secretly supported by some of the nobles, "who gaped after a morsel of church lands."* From this time the controversy was carried on with more bitterness. In the outset it was

* Camden's Elizabeth, in Comp. His. vol. ii. p. 410. Leicester and other nobles, who were anxious to seize the property of the church, secretly favoured the men of the separation as enemies to the bishops.

confined within a very narrow compass, but every year the breach became wider.

This was the period of the rise of presbytery in England : previous to the year 1568 or 1569 it was unknown. All the puritans had hitherto been united, objecting to the ceremonies only, but refusing to separate from the church : from this time they were divided into two parties, the one, and that by far the larger, retaining their former views, the other objecting not only to the ceremonies, but to the entire fabric of the English church. This distinction must not be forgotten by those who wish to understand the religious history of this and the succeeding reigns. The moderate puritans were members of the church, though dissatisfied with the terms of conformity ; they condemned separation, and at this early period toleration was never contemplated : the rigid puritans, or, as they were termed, separatists or presbyterians, entertained a rooted aversion to the very constitution of the church. It was now necessary to check their progress by a more vigorous enforcement of the Act of Uniformity.

About the same period the hopes of the protestants were clouded by the queen's dangerous illness. The heir to the crown was a papist, Mary of Scotland. The catholics were in expectation of seeing again the ascendancy of their church. Elizabeth, however, was restored to perfect health, and the dark cloud was dispersed. Her prolonged life was a signal blessing to the church.

The papists did not fail to avail themselves of the advantages afforded by the disputes among the protestants. During this and the succeeding reign, the Jesuits evinced unceasing activity in fomenting the divisions : for several years the papists frequented the services of the church, hoping to reduce the country to obedience to the see of Rome. This conformity was allowed by the Romish church, for the purpose of secretly undermining the reformation. Many of the priests conformed on the same grounds, hoping that, by

remaining at their posts, they should be able to take advantage of every favourable circumstance as it presented itself. Finding, after some years, that no benefit was likely to result from this compliance, they changed their plans of operation, and abstained from attendance on the service of the church. Some of the Jesuits assumed the garb and the manner of puritanical ministers. The history of Faithful Commion, a member of the order of Jesuits, is generally known. He came to England in 1567: he advocated, like a zealous puritan, a purer discipline, and spoke vehemently against the pope. He subsequently escaped to Rome, and received absolution from the pontiff. Shortly after, Heath, another Jesuit, though in appearance a puritan, was suspected and questioned by the Bishop of Rochester for disparaging the ceremonies. This man had been sent from Rome by his superior, for the express purpose of feigning himself a puritan, in order that the breach in the church might be widened. While preaching at Rochester, a letter chanced to drop from his pocket, which had been received from a Jesuit on the continent, and contained directions for the regulation of his conduct. In his apartments, a license from the Jesuits and a bull from the pope were discovered, by which he was authorised to preach such doctrines as were calculated to divide the protestants. Many others acted under the same cloak, "disguising themselves as protestants, to preach false doctrine."* Their object was to prevent a union between the church and the puritans: they joined themselves, not with the old and moderate puritans, but with those who separated altogether. The secret workings of the Jesuits will be more fully seen in the next two reigns.

Finding that it was not possible to weaken the cause of the reformers by permitting the people to attend the public services, and that there was no prospect of subjugating the

* Strype's Annals of Elizabeth, p. 484.

country to the holy see, the pope, in 1570, issued the bull of excommunication. All the queen's subjects were absolved from their allegiance: and all foreign princes were excited to take up arms against her as an usurper and a heretic. The watchful care of Providence was never more remarkably displayed than in the proceedings of the first nine or ten years of Elizabeth. For that space the pope permitted the people to attend the established church, for the purpose of undermining it. The contrary result was produced: and the common people, after nine or ten years' attendance on the public services, were become so attached to the new faith, or so indifferent to the old, that there was now but little danger of their relapsing into popery. The wise were taken in their own craftiness: and the measures planned with so much art, and intended to overthrow the reformation, became the very means of its establishment on an immovable foundation. At an earlier period the pope's proceedings would have placed the country in a dangerous position: but now the queen was prepared for the consequences: and so far was the excommunicating bull from endangering the cause, that it had the effect of rallying the subjects of Elizabeth so closely around the throne, that there was no longer any danger that the body of the people would fall again into superstition.

CHAPTER V.

1571—1603.

PRESBYTERY SET UP—CARTWRIGHT'S ADMONITION—CONTROVERSY WITH WHITGIFT—CONFORMITY ENFORCED—DEPRIVATIONS UNDER PARKER—DEATH AND CHARACTER OF PARKER—GRINDAL SUCCEEDS—HIS MILDNESS—PROPHESYINGS—GRINDAL SEQUESTERED FROM HIS SEE—LENITY TO THE PURITANS—BROWNISTS—GRINDAL'S DEATH—WHITGIFT SUCCEEDS—ATTEMPTS TO ENFORCE CONFORMITY—FEW ONLY DEPRIVED—APPLICATION OF THE TERM PURITAN—PARTIALITY OF NEAL AND MR. BROOK—HIGH COMMISSION—SOME SUFFER FOR POLITICAL OFFENCES—LENITY TOWARDS THE MODERATE PURITANS—QUEEN'S DEATH AND CHARACTER—VIEWS ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT—TOLERATION—PAROCHIAL PSALMODY.

SUBSEQUENT to the period at which presbytery was set up in this country, the breach among the protestants became wider. The year 1572 was distinguished by the establishment of the first presbytery in England: the members were accustomed to assemble privately at Wandsworth, in Surrey. It was, says Fuller, "the first-born of all the presbyteries in England." Some of the first puritans had now been removed by death, and a new race, animated by a different spirit, had succeeded them.* Cartwright, the Lady Margaret's professor at Cambridge, was one of the chief leaders of the separation. Not satisfied with opposing the ceremonies, he extended the controversy so as to affect the very foundation of the hierarchy. Cartwright's principles must not be confounded with those of the bulk of the puritans, whose objections extended no further than to some of the rites of the church. So far were the moderate men from adopting the new notions, that Fox, one

* Fuller observes, "When the first set of puritans were gone, behold, another generation of active and zealous non-conformists succeeded them: endeavouring in all things to conform the government of the English church to the presbyterian reformation."—Lib. ix. p. 81.

of the most distinguished of their party, complains of the factious spirit of the separatists. "They despised him, because he could not rail against bishops as they did: but, if he could be as mad as they, they would be kinder to him." He therefore advises the governors of the church "to look well after that sort of men; for, under a pretence of greater purity, they will never give over till they have brought men under a Jewish slavery."*

Cartwright was the author of the celebrated Admonition to the Parliament. In this document the views of the presbyterians are fully stated. How widely they differ from those of the moderate puritans may be seen by a perusal of the Admonition itself. A former Admonition had been published by some of the party: but the second is that to which they appeal for an exposition of their sentiments.

The Admonition of Cartwright, and the actual setting up of presbyterian worship, rendered the bishops more vigilant in enforcing conformity. The setting up a separate mode of worship was an act of hostility to the church, which would not have been tolerated by the presbyterians in their opponents. The publication of the Admonition led to a controversy between Whitgift and Cartwright. After publishing a reply, Whitgift published a defence of his reply. In this latter work he adopted the fairest method with his adversary: he printed the whole of the Admonition in paragraphs, with his own reply to each.

From this period more severity was used towards the non-conforming clergy. But, even now, great lenity was shewn to those moderate men who entertained scruples relative to some of the rites enjoined by the church. The obstinate characters were deprived, but they were few in number:

* Fuller, as quoted by Stillingfleet on Separation, p. 24. Fox, in one of his Letters, speaks of the "*factiosa illa puritanorum capita:*" and adds, that he is "*totus ab iis alienus,*" and unwilling "*Perbacchari in episcopis.*"—FULLER, p. 107.

while others who only occasionally conformed were still connived at. If some of them were suspended, they became itinerant preachers, lecturers, or chaplains.* It was necessary that the reins of discipline should be drawn more tight: yet, after all, the penalty of deprivation was incurred but by few. Even suspension was delayed a considerable time after admonition. It is stated by Strype, that the puritans were by no means harshly treated at this period: none were deprived till after repeated admonitions and suspensions. Humphries and others retained all their preferments till their death, notwithstanding their non-compliance with the letter of the Act of Uniformity. When, however, some of the violent presbyterians began to discover as great an unwillingness to yield to the queen in civil matters as in religious, it became necessary to act with more severity. Had not the views of the one division of the puritans been thus changed, as much lenity and forbearance would have been exercised as during the early part of the reign of Elizabeth. The change in the views of that party is noticed by Bishop Pilkington: "the disputes," he remarks, "which began about the vestments, were now carried further, even to the whole constitution: pious persons lamented this, atheists laughed, and the papists blew the coals: and the blame of all was cast upon the bishops."

It is, however, difficult to decide on the numbers actually sequestered during Parker's administration, owing to the contradictory statements of different writers. According to the statements of some of the writers favourable to the puritans, one hundred ministers were deprived in the year 1572: while, according to others, the sentence was only executed on one or two. Speaking of this year, the accurate Strype remarks, that "they were as gently treated as might be: no kind of brotherly persuasion being omitted towards

* Neal, vol. i. p. 241.

them, most of them as yet kept their livings, though one or two were displaced.”* The writer states that the queen and her commissioners winked at many who would not comply. The difference in the statement of the numbers actually deprived is probably owing to the want of a distinction between suspension and deprivation. Neal states that, in 1573, three hundred were deprived in the diocess of Norfolk alone, whereas Strype mentions only three.† Here, probably, admonitions were mistaken for severer punishments.

Parker died in 1575, having held the metropolitan dignity since the accession of the queen. His administration was considered severe by the puritans, but without any reason. Any individual in the situation of Parker would have found himself under the necessity of acting nearly in the same manner. To allege that he persecuted the puritans, is merely to state that he acted on principles fully recognised by the whole body. He was a pious and conscientious man, and his counsels were of essential service to the queen in the establishment of the reformation.

After a vacancy of nine months, Grindal was appointed to the see of Canterbury. The mildness of this excellent prelate was acknowledged even by the puritans. As the maxims, by which the men of that age were governed, are now universally abandoned, it would be unfair to form our estimate of Elizabeth’s prelates according to the principles of our own times. Grindal, however, was more inclined to relax the reins of discipline than his predecessor. He evinced a greater unwillingness to execute the laws: and none were suspended, much less deprived, except those of the more violent sort. The puritans were not, however, satisfied: and, so far from being gained by the milder measures of Grindal, increased in numbers, and became less inclined to submission.

* Life of Whitgift.

† Madox’s Vindication, p. 340.

It is necessary to remark, that much depended on the bishops. As they were, more or less, inclined to severity, so were the laws administered with more or less rigour. Hence the situation of the puritans depended on the views of the bishops. During the mild administration of Grindal, the presbyterians were emboldened to proceed to greater lengths of opposition.

Grindal fell under the displeasure of the queen, in consequence of his refusal to suppress those meetings of the clergy termed prophesyings. They had sprung up in the time of Parker, and were at first encouraged by the bishops. The clergy of a certain district met at a given time and place: one of their body presided, and each minister was called upon to give his opinion on the subject under discussion. The meetings were commenced and concluded with prayer. In 1577, the queen, moved by some of her advisers, resolved to suppress these assemblies; and the archbishop was ordered to communicate her intentions to the bishops. Grindal wrote to her majesty on the subject, defending the prophesyings, and refusing to suppress them. Enraged at his refusal, the queen ordered that he should be sequestered from his see: and, though he was afterwards restored, he never recovered her majesty's favour. It was supposed that Leicester's enmity was the cause of this severity. He was in favour with the queen at the time. The prophesyings were, however, suppressed.

Many of the peaceable puritans were engaged as lecturers in churches, where prayers were read by clergymen who entertained no scruples relative to the ceremonies. Not daring to create a schism by an open separation, and yet anxious to avoid full conformity, many of the scrupulous ministers, who held preferments, engaged curates who had no conscientious scruples: hence the laws were observed, and they themselves escaped observation. At this time the majority of the puritans still remained in the bosom of the

church.* The presbyterians alone had separated. The former still received their orders from the bishops: but they omitted the wearing of the surplice and the use of the ceremonies as frequently as possible, complying only occasionally, that, when questioned, they might evade the operation of the laws. About the year 1580, the queen ordered the bishops to inquire after these half conformists, and to compel them to perform all the services at least twice in the year. The lenity of the government is manifest from this order. The men who held preferments in the church, and who had received them on the condition of conformity, could not reasonably complain of hardship in such a regulation.

It was during the administration of Grindal that the Brownists sprang up. As the presbyterians had branched off from the body of the puritans, so, in 1582, the Brownists separated not only from the church, but also from the presbyterians, with whom, up to this time, they had been mingled. It will be seen hereafter that the independents derived their distinctive principles from the Brownists. Their founder, Robert Brown, would not admit the church of England to be a true church. They renounced communion not only with the English church, but with all the reformed churches on the continent. The activity of the bishops in discovering their congregations was unceasing, and ere long Brown himself, and many of his followers, quitted the kingdom. The founder returned in 1589, when he conformed, and held preferment in the church until his death in 1630. Some of the party, however, lingered in the country, and propagated their opinions. They were punished with considerable severity; not, however, for their religious opinions, but for offences against the state. Two of their leaders, Coppinger and Thacker, were executed in 1583, for publishing several libels, which were construed into treason

* Neal, vol. i. p. 343.

against the queen. In the estimation of the queen's advisers, they did not suffer for religious, but political offences: their indictments were for felony, and at the regular assizes. The civil power, therefore, and not the ecclesiastical, must bear the blame of their execution.

Grindal died in 1583, and was succeeded by Whitgift, who was inclined to walk in the steps of Parker rather than in those of his immediate predecessor. It was the special charge of the queen that he should restore the uniformity of the church, which, in consequence of Grindal's indisposition to press conformity, and the secret practices of some of the nobility, had recently fallen into disuse in many parts of the kingdom. A distinction has already been pointed out between the early portion of Elizabeth's reign and the latter. From her accession till 1572 was the first period of puritanism, "during which," says an able writer, "the ceremonies were the only ground of complaint. Afterwards they transferred to episcopacy that dislike they had to the bishops."* From 1570 till Parker's death more severity was practised; when, on Grindal's elevation, the reins of discipline were slackened until 1583, the period of Whitgift's promotion to the metropolitan dignity. It was usual when an archbishop entered on his office, to hold a visitation as soon as possible. Much discretionary power was then, as now, vested in the bishops, who usually framed their own articles of visitation, and adopted such measures as in their estimation were best calculated to promote the welfare of the church.

Whitgift, who was an advocate for rigid conformity, the more effectually to compel the puritans to comply, framed three articles to be subscribed by all the clergy. The first related to the queen's supremacy; the second to the common prayer; the third to the articles. These three articles were embodied in the canons of 1603, and have ever since been

* Hallam's Cons. Hist. vol. i. p. 251.

subscribed by the clergy of the Anglican church. The archbishop was subjected to all kinds of reproach in consequence of these articles. Still the quiet and moderate puritans received little molestation even from Whitgift. That conformity was pressed with more rigour than heretofore is certain ; but Calvin, Knox, and the Scottish reformers, acted with as much severity against those who dissented from them. To Whitgift the church of England is bound by the obligations of gratitude, since he was the means of preserving her property from the grasp of the avaricious nobles.

At his primary visitation the above articles were offered for subscription. Neal enumerates 233 in six counties who were suspended :* he admits, however, that 49 only were deprived. The more accurate and less prejudiced Strype states that the number of conformable ministers in eleven diocesses was 786, and of nonconformists 49. From this period until the death of the queen, Neal, whose enmity to the archbishop is by no means concealed, is unable to enumerate any considerable number of the clergy actually deprived. Indulgences were granted to moderate men throughout the whole of this reign : even the enemies of Whitgift admit that suspensions were removed from many at the solicitation of persons of influence. He permitted his old antagonist Cartwright to retain a situation at Warwick, on condition of not meddling with controversy : and the latter, though previously a strong Presbyterian, embraced the archbishop's offer, and died in the bosom of the church of England. On his dying bed he lamented the schism of which he had been one of the chief supporters.†

It should be observed that the term puritan was applied indiscriminately to all who entertained scruples relative to conformity. It was applied to three distinct parties : to the moderate puritans, who never left the church, to the pres-

* Neal, vol. i. p. 400.

† Strype's Whitgift, p. 554.

byterians, and to the Brownists. When the assertion is made that Whitgift persecuted the puritans, it must be received with a qualification. The individuals deprived of their livings were presbyterians and Brownists, whose continuance in the church would have endangered its existence. The moderate men remained in the establishment, either by occasionally conforming, or by the connivance of the bishops. So late as 1586, many puritans held preferments. During that year a considerable number subscribed the Book of Discipline; a fact that proves the lenity of the government. From the outcries against Whitgift's severities, it might be imagined that none of the puritans remained in the church, and that this book was subscribed by none but deprived ministers; yet Neal, on this point a most unexceptionable authority, assures us that the "Discipline" was signed or approved by 500 clergymen, all beneficed in the church.* If 500 clergymen could venture to subscribe this document, we need no stronger evidence of the forbearance of the bishops. It appears that many, who stumbled at conformity, and yet hesitated to incur the guilt of schism, subscribed the book, and voluntarily subjected themselves to its impositions, for the sake of satisfying their consciences. They engaged to use all convenient means to further its advancement in the church; and after these engagements they submitted to authority.

There were many excellent men in the English church at this period, who did not coincide in all the views of Parker and Whitgift respecting the ceremonies of the church; still they officiated at her altars, and abhorred the idea of separation. Yet, in the pages of Neal, and writers of a similar stamp, these men, and the presbyterians and Brownists,

* Neal, vol. i. pp. 483, 484. Cecil's testimony is strongly in favour of the moderation of the ecclesiastical authorities: "Some (speaking of the clergy) celebrated the services in surplices, some in square caps, others in round."

are included in the general term puritan. In perusing works of the class alluded to, the reader is led to imagine that the utmost severity was exercised towards all indiscriminately. Brooks, the author of the "Lives of the Puritans," has classed all the puritans, of whatever grade, as enemies of the church of England. Many of his sufferers were quiet conformists, and continued so until their death. Whittaker, Mede, and Bernard Gilpin, are classed with Travers and Cartwright. How must a churchman of the present day be surprised to find the names of Mede and Gilpin among the puritans. The only ground for placing Gilpin among the sufferers, must have been his refusal of a bishopric; but he refused in consequence of the responsibility attached to the office, and not from any objection to the church. Gilpin's sentiments are recorded by himself in a letter inserted in his Life: "The reformation is just; essentials are there concerned; and to disturb the peace of the nation for trifles, when all were agreed in essentials, is unchristian." Yet this letter, so important as shewing Gilpin's views, is entirely suppressed in the Sketch of his Life, by Mr. Brooks. As another specimen of Mr. Brooks' partiality, it may be stated, that Burnet is quoted in praise of the puritans; but the conclusion of the sentence, where Burnet adds that "they were factious, and insolent, and spiteful against all who differed from them," is entirely suppressed.

All breaches of ecclesiastical discipline were considered in the high commission. When the queen's supremacy was established by parliament, the authority thus conferred was delegated to a certain number of commissioners. An oath, termed the oath *ex officio*, was imposed, by which the accused were compelled, under certain penalties, to answer any questions. Such were the principles of the age: even Calvin pursued a similar mode of enforcing his discipline at Geneva.

Many attempts have been made to fasten on the queen the charge of sacrificing the lives of her subjects for offences against religion. The charge is unfounded. The individuals suffered, whether justly or unjustly, for offences against the state. Barrow, Greenwood, and Coppinger, were deemed guilty of treason, and it was for treason they suffered: "Elizabeth's sufferers were not put to death for religion."* Many of the presbyterians even grossly insulted the queen. At Bury, some ministers caused the severe censure against the church of Thyatira (Rev. xi. verse 20) to be painted in the church, under the queen's arms; yet the parties were never questioned. "The puritans of this age were divided into two ranks: some, mild and moderate, contented only to enjoy their own conscience; others fierce and fiery, to the disturbance of the church and state."†

In the present day, a proper distinction is not made between the Brownists and the puritans—they are usually classed together; and because severe measures were exercised towards the former, who suffered as political offenders, it is stated that Elizabeth was a severe persecutor of the puritans. No assertion is more false. It is true, the Brownists were punished; it is equally true, that they considered themselves as sufferers for religion: but their offences were political. In their proceedings, religion and politics were strangely mingled: thus their first object was to defame the church in a series of pamphlets, by rendering the name of bishop odious to the common people.‡ The chief of these pamphlets were—"Martin Mar-Prelate," "The Demonstration of Discipline," "Diotrephes," and "Minerals." The bishops were termed "popelings," "petty antichrists," "idle drones," "bawds to all kinds of sinners," "bishops of the devil," "cogging knaves," and "enemies of

* Hallam's Const. Hist. vol. i. p. 222.

† Fuller, lib. ix. p. 76.

‡ Camden's Elizabeth, Const. Hist. vol. ii. 550.

God." In this language many of the presbyterians concurred : by them the bishops were compared to locusts ; and Deering resembled the queen to an untamed heifer. The ceremonies were termed " liveries of antichrist," " accursed leaven of the blasphemous popish priesthood," " cursed patches of popery and idolatry." When Hawkins, one of their number, was pressed to conform by the moderate Grindal, and the question " have we a godly princess?" was put, he replied, " Why this question? The prophet answers in the Psalms, ' How can they have understanding that work iniquity, spoiling my people, and that extol vanity.' " Similar expressions occur even in the presbyterian admonition. With such men it was impossible to act with forbearance ; yet for these offences severe penalties were not inflicted. Barrow, and Greenwood, and Parry, the supposed authors of the pamphlets just mentioned, were executed for sedition, with which they had mingled religion. They were tried, not in the high commission, but at the assizes.

At this period, and even much later, it was deemed lawful to punish with death for offences which would now be viewed in a very different light : accordingly, in this reign and the next, some of the violent anabaptists were executed in various parts of the kingdom. Their opinions were considered dangerous ; and churchmen, puritans, and presbyterians, acted on the same principles. These severities, therefore, must be attributed to their true cause, the false maxims of the age. All the reformers, both in England and on the continent, asserted the necessity of punishing obstinate heretics with death.

From the previous statements it will be seen, that, notwithstanding the charges of severity so frequently alleged as a blot on the memory of the queen, much forbearance was exercised towards the puritans strictly so called, and even towards the presbyterians, none of the latter being deprived until after repeated admonitions. The punishment

of the Brownists was not persecution, as they suffered for civil offences by due course of law. Towards the end of her reign, the controversy partially ceased. As the heir to the throne had been nurtured under the presbyterian discipline, all parties awaited the demise of Elizabeth with considerable anxiety. The queen died in 1603, after a long and prosperous reign of forty-four years. It is evident that the great body of the puritans were awed into subjection by her vigorous administration. It is said that she ruled with absolute sway; but it cannot be proved that she was more absolute than her predecessors; and notwithstanding her alleged severities against the puritans, religion flourished. Even those who were dissatisfied with her proceedings were compelled to acknowledge the vigour of her government, under which they enjoyed advantages unknown to Englishmen at any former period. At the commencement of her reign she was surrounded by difficulties, against which no ordinary character could successfully have combated. If her difficulties in the former portion of her reign, her skill in extricating the country from them, the profound peace enjoyed by her subjects, and, above all, the unquiet and restless spirit of many of her people, are considered, it will be admitted that she was one of the wisest of England's sovereigns. She was a glorious instrument raised up by Providence, at a moment of imminent danger, to rescue this country from the trammels of popish superstition. "She stands on record," says one by no means friendly to her character, "as a wise and politic princess; and though her protestant subjects were divided about church affairs, they all discovered a high veneration for her person and government, on which account she was the glory of the age in which she lived, and will be the admiration of posterity."*

* Neal, vol. i. p. 602.

By some of the puritans she was charged with leaning towards popery,—a charge as unjust as it is cruel. The restraints she endured under her sister; the bull of excommunication; and, above all, the constant plots of the Jesuits, are triumphant answers to this imputation. Some of the violent puritans resorted to this charge for the purpose of stirring up the people against the church; but the continental reformers will clear the queen of such an imputation. They all viewed her as the stay of the reformation. In 1591, Beza, the successor of Calvin at Geneva, not only speaks in high terms of the queen, but of the church. At a previous period Calvin had asserted the lawfulness of conformity; and Beza appears to have entertained the same views. His words are, in a letter to Whitgift: “It was never my intention to oppose the ecclesiastical polity of your English church, nor to require of you to form your church according to the pattern of our presbyterian discipline; for, whilst the substance of your doctrine is uniform with the church of Christ, it is lawful for us to differ in other matters, according as the circumstances of times, places, and persons, require, and is avowed by the prescription of antiquity. And for this effect, I desire and hope that the sacred and holy society of your bishops will continue and maintain for ever their right and title in the government of the church.” Beza would never have charged the queen with leaning towards popery.

Before we enter upon the next reign, there are a few subjects of some importance and of considerable interest to which, though they will fall under observation at a later period, the attention of the reader may be briefly directed. The subjects alluded to are the opinions of the age respecting toleration, church government, and the state of parochial psalmody.

Among the reformers there was only one opinion relative to religious liberty. All were agreed in deprecating

the notion of toleration — all concurred in opinion that there must be one uniform system. The moderate puritans required the rejection of some ceremonies, but did not contend for toleration: they advocated one form with which all should comply. And even the presbyterians were averse to toleration. They contended for their own discipline in the church, not for a toleration for separate worship. The church was called upon to renounce her discipline, and establish the presbyterian. They pleaded conscience, and yet denied the same plea to those who were attached to the liturgy. Had they succeeded, their terms of conformity would have been more severe than those of the church. The question between them and the church was, whether episcopacy or presbytery should be adopted.

It would be unfair to form our judgments of either party by the wiser maxims of our own times; but, while one class of writers confine the charge of persecution to the church, it becomes necessary that the case should be fairly stated. The queen and the governors of the church acted in accordance with the principles of the age — principles recognised by all parties: nor would a toleration have been possible, as none would receive it from their opponents; none admitted the doctrine of religious liberty; not a single individual had as yet advocated the principles of toleration. Had the presbyterians evinced a disposition to tolerate others, they might with reason have complained of the practice of the church in enforcing conformity.

The Act of Uniformity was, however, necessary; and to it were even the puritans indebted for their security. Without the security of that act the secret designs of the Jesuits might have been crowned with success. As soon as a toleration was practicable, it was conceded; and from the revolution the rights of conscience have been scrupulously regarded. The Emperor Charles V. was convinced before his death of the impossibility of causing men, whose minds

are so differently constituted, to entertain the same opinions in religion. After his abdication of the imperial purple, he was accustomed to amuse his leisure hours in attempting to cause a number of clocks to strike the hour at the same moment,—an enterprise in which he was unsuccessful. From this circumstance he inferred the folly of attempting to force men, the mechanism of whose minds is far more intricate than that of a clock, to subscribe to one creed.*

It is certain, however, that the church evinced a more tolerant spirit than her opponents. Had the puritans succeeded in erecting their own platforms, it would have been imposed under severe penalties. Had the Geneva discipline been established, it would have pressed upon the people with more weight than the English episcopacy. The principle of religious liberty, indeed, originated in the disputes of this period; but to allege that the puritans were its authors is contrary to facts: as a body, they were less tolerant than the bishops. No latitude for tender consciences would have been allowed had they succeeded in their object. After more than a century of fierce and angry controversy, indeed, all parties saw the folly of enforcing uniformity. Hence, at the revolution, the most complete toleration was granted to those who scrupled to conform to the established church. The revolution, however, was effected by churchmen; and churchmen were the framers of the Act of Toleration. The assertion that the tree of religious liberty was planted and watered by the puritans, is entirely destitute of foundation. Had they advocated toleration, the assertion would have been correct. They did not contend for liberty to all, but for the establishment of their own discipline.

* Even Lord Bacon, with all his sagacity, did not perceive that in the progress of time it would be necessary to permit all men to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. In matters of science he was endowed with almost more than human foresight; but with respect to toleration, his views were as narrow as those of his contemporaries.

The question of church government was vehemently agitated at this period. The reformers were agreed that no precise form was laid down in the New Testament; but when the puritans became divided into two parties, the presbyterian party advocated the Divine right of their system. Cranmer and all the reformers asserted, that the form of government was left to the civil magistrate to determine according to times and circumstances. The prelates of this reign maintained the same views; but, like the earlier reformers, they considered episcopacy, as retained in the English church, to have been the apostolic practice. They did not, however, consider any mode of government essential to the constitution of the church; hence the validity of ordination as exercised in those reformed churches where episcopacy was not retained was admitted. By an act passed in the thirteenth year of this reign, the ordinations of foreign reformed churches were declared valid, and their ministers were capable of enjoying preferment on receiving a licence from the bishop.* Many who had received presbyterian ordination abroad were allowed to exercise their ministry in the church of England, provided they conformed. Travers, Whittingham, Cartwright, and many others, had received no other, and their ordination was never questioned. At a subsequent period this practice was denounced; and in 1662, it was ordered that no minister should exercise his office in the Church of England, who had not received episcopal ordination.

It appears that the reformers did not contend for the superiority of the office of bishop as a distinct order from the priesthood, but as different only in degree. Nor did any member of the church of England claim this distinction till the year 1588, when Bancroft, in his celebrated sermon at Paul's Cross, asserted it. The presbyterians contended

* Strype's Annals, p. 524.

that their discipline was enjoined in scripture: it was designated the tabernacle that God had appointed. Its advocates alleged even that, where it was not established, God's ordinance was not performed. In the admonition it was asserted, that the church of England had "neither the word rightly preached nor the sacraments sincerely ministered: and that she mixed together Christ and antichrist, God and the devil." Both in the admonition and in other documents of the presbyterians, it is asserted that the regulation of orders and ceremonies does not, in any way, rest with the civil magistrate. It was against these opinions that Bancroft's sermon was directed. Hitherto no churchman had pleaded for the divine right of church government. In the articles set forth by the authority of the queen, the English form is said only to be agreeable to the word of God. Such an expression is entirely different from the strong terms used by the presbyterians, whose discipline was not only declared to be agreeable to God's word, but the identical platform established by Christ himself. In the controversy with Cartwright, Whitgift, who, like Hooker, rested the controversy on the indifferency of rites and ceremonies, again and again asserts that no particular platform is prescribed in scripture. He states, "that, though the scriptures were a perfect rule of faith, they were not designed as a standard of church discipline or government." Cartwright, the champion of presbytery, maintained the opposite, endeavouring to prove that his model was prescribed by the inspired volume. Hooker, and all the writers of that day, maintain the mutability of the form of church government. They held that the English church adhered more closely than any other reformed church to the apostolic practice: but they never asserted that their own form, or any other, was absolutely necessary.

It is true that, at a later period, the claim of divine institution was put forth by some churchmen. But nowhere is the claim asserted in the articles, homilies, or formularies of

the church : and if some of the bishops adopted it, the cause is to be found in the extravagant pretensions of the presbyterians. "It was not till afterwards," says Hallam, speaking of this period, "that the defenders of the established order found out that one claim of divine right was best met by another."* Yet, whatever may have been the individual opinions of some of her members, the church has never, in her articles, asserted the divine institution of the system adopted by herself. How different a language is spoken by the recognised documents of the presbyterians. The twentieth article asserts, that it rests with the church to decree rites and ceremonies : while the presbyterians aver that these are fixed in scripture, and, therefore, unalterable. The thirty-fourth article declares, that "every particular and national church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies and rites of the church, ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying." The indifference of ceremonies is here asserted in the strongest terms, in accordance with the sentiments of Hooker, whose arguments are yet unanswered.

Between churchmen and the moderate puritans no difference of opinion existed on fundamental principles. Both parties concurred in the appointment of bishops, and in the lawfulness of a prescribed form of prayer : the only dispute was as to the propriety of some particular ceremonies. The controversy was chiefly carried on between the church on the one hand, and the presbyterians on the other. When the first race of moderate puritans was departed, many of their descendants concurred with the presbyterians : and in the reign of Charles I., as will be seen, nearly the whole body adopted the Scottish platform. The subject will necessarily fall under notice at a later period : it may, for the present, be dismissed with the remark, that, however strongly some

* Const. Hist. vol. i. p. 293.

particular individuals may have pleaded for the divine right of episcopacy, the plea originated in the still stronger allegations of the presbyterians in favour of their system.

Much curious information is to be gleaned from the writers of these times relative to the parochial psalmody. Previous to the reformation, the various chants were adapted to Latin words: but, when popery was cast out, English words were used. Various portions of the service were either said or sung at the discretion of the minister, as is evident from the old rubrics. Some of the psalms were translated into verse as early as the reign of Henry VIII.; but it does not appear that they were used in the parish churches. The first complete metrical version was that of Sternhold and Hopkins. Marot and Beza translated the psalms into verse for the use of the foreign churches; and Sternhold was the first Englishman who copied their example. For his own solace, he translated fifty-one psalms into English verse. During the reign of Mary, Hopkins, one of the English exiles on the continent, completed fifty-eight more: twenty-seven were finished by Thomas Norton after Elizabeth's accession: and five were added by Whittingham. The protestants in Edward's reign were grateful for the psalms translated by Sternhold: and, on the accession of Elizabeth, the remaining psalms, which had been translated by the exiles, were collected together into one volume, and, according to the title-page, were allowed to be sung in all churches, as well as private families. It is said that they were used rather by connivance than by approbation. According to Heylin, no such allowance could be produced when the matter was disputed in the high commission.* They were at first sung in private houses: by degrees they were introduced into churches before and after morning and evening prayer, and before and after sermon. Heylin, who cannot conceal his

* Heylin's *Presbyterians*, p. 214.

dislike to the version of psalms, states, that they soon so far prevailed as to exclude from the churches the *Te Deum*, the *Benedictus*, the *Magnificat*, and the *Nunc Dimittis*. At the time of their appearance, however, they were received by the reformers with great affection. The above-named writer also adds, that the parish clerk was taught to call on the people "to sing to the praise and glory of God," while no such exhortation was given at the naming of the lessons or the daily psalms in the calendar. As compositions, they do not fall much below the general poetry of that age: though Fuller censures the performance as so poor in some parts, that two hammers on a smith's anvil would make better music. The entire version of the psalms was first published in 1562 by John Day. The subsequent history of this version will be related in the account of the proceedings of the Westminster Assembly.

CHAPTER VI.

JAMES.—1603—1625.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PARTIES—MILLENARY PETITION—CONFERENCE AT HAMPTON COURT—DEATH OF WHITGIFT—CONVOCATIONS—CANONS—BANCROFT SUCCEEDS WHITGIFT—HIS EFFORTS TO ENFORCE CONFORMITY—SECOND SEPARATION—BANCROFT'S DEATH AND CHARACTER—ABBOT SUCCEEDS—DIFFERENT CLASSES OF PURITANS—LAUD—BOOK OF SPORTS—TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE—JAMES'S DEATH AND CHARACTER.

THE controversy between the church and her opponents had abated in violence during the last years of Elizabeth. As James had been educated in a presbyterian church, the puritans of all grades expected much from his accession. Up to this period they had contrived to conform, satisfying their consciences by a subscription to the Book of Discipline. The accession of James raised the expectations both of the puritans strictly so called, and also of the presbyterians, who, as related under the late reign, had branched off from the general body of those who scrupled at full conformity. The presbyterians expected that the king would declare himself in favour of their discipline: while the puritans hoped that the ceremonies would be so modified as to allow of their conformity without scruple. Neither party was gratified; for James declared in favour of the church. Episcopacy was more consonant with the tastes and feelings of the monarch than the presbyterian model: consequently every thing was permitted to remain in the state in which it was left by the late queen. James had received so many affronts from the presbyterian kirk of Scotland, that he could not but rejoice at being emancipated from its restraints. Moreover, he viewed the episcopal government as more favourable to monarchy: and hence his memorable expression, "No bishop no king."

Before the king reached London, the puritans presented to his majesty the celebrated millenary petition, so called from the circumstance, as was stated, of its having the signatures of a thousand ministers attached. Not more than 750 of the clergy, however, actually signed the petition. As this petition embodied all the grievances of the puritans at the commencement of this reign, a brief notice of its contents will enable the reader to determine what their real sentiments were at the period of James's accession. It must be observed, that the rigid presbyterians did not subscribe this document. They state that, "neither as factious men affecting a popular purity in the church, nor as schismatics; but, as faithful subjects of Christ and loyal subjects to your majesty, we could do no less than acquaint your majesty with our particular griefs. Although divers of us that sue for reformation subscribe to the book: some upon protestation, some upon exposition given them, some with condition, rather than the church should be deprived of their labour: yet now we, to the number of more than a thousand, groaning as under a common burden of human rites and ceremonies, do, with one joint consent, humble ourselves at your majesty's feet, to be eased and released in this behalf." They then enumerate the proposed alterations, and request that the "cross in baptism be taken away; the cap and surplice not urged; that none bow at the name of Jesus; that the canonical scriptures only be read in the church; that ministers subscribe only according to law, to the articles and to the supremacy only; and that the oath 'ex officio' be more sparingly used." Such were the chief grievances enumerated in this petition: and they shew the views of the puritans of this period.

The individuals whose names were attached to this petition were beneficed clergymen in the church; a circumstance which proves one of two things, either that the great body of the puritans had concealed their scruples during the

preceding reign, or that they had been tolerated by the authorities of the church in their partial conformity. They had hitherto conformed so far as to avoid the penalties ; yet, as their conformity was any thing but general, the fact of such numbers being at this time in the church, proves the moderation of the bishops. Those who had suffered deprivation were men of a different character from these petitioners ; they were rigid presbyterians and Brownists. The influence of the puritans in the church was extensive. In the early period of Laud's residence in Oxford, he complains that the face of the university was so changed, that there was little to be seen of the church of England. The disuse of the surplice had, indeed, become so common, that the convocation of 1603 framed two new canons, for the express purpose of enjoining its use on all the clergy. The influence exercised by the puritans was owing to the secret favour of Leicester and other ambitious nobles, who envied the power of the bishops.

James, however, deemed it right to pay some attention to the disputes in agitation. Accordingly the heads of the two parties met in conference at Hampton Court. The disputants on both sides were nominated by his majesty, who sat as moderator. Dr. Reynolds, Professor of Divinity in Oxford, on the part of the puritans, reduced all their objections to four heads. First, that the doctrine of the church might be preserved in purity. Secondly, that good pastors might be planted in all churches. Thirdly, that the church government might be sincerely administered. Fourthly, that the Book of Common Prayer might be fitted to more increase of piety. The objections under these heads were few, and similar to those expressed in the millenary petition. As to episcopal government, or the lawfulness of prescribed forms, there was no difference of opinion. It is singular that a body of excellent men should have scrupled conformity in consequence of such apparently trivial objections. It is, however,

to be regretted that James did not seize this opportunity of reconciling them to the church. A few concessions of minor importance would at this time have satisfied them; and though their scruples may now appear foolish, a little indulgence might safely have been granted.

Nothing was gained by the conference. To enter into all the particulars is foreign to our purpose in this work. Some slight alterations were made in the Book of Common Prayer, but the offensive ceremonies were retained. The particular thanksgivings were added at this conference, and the word "remission" inserted in the absolution. The catechism from the Lord's prayer, and the rubric in private baptism, were added soon after.

At this period the puritans were as strenuous advocates for uniformity as their opponents. Were it possible for the old puritans to revisit the earth, they would not join with any party, except the church of England; for the principles of modern dissent relative to the power of separate congregations, were regarded by them with abhorrence.

At James's accession some of the scrupulous clergy began to alter and omit portions of the daily service. After the termination of the conference a proclamation was issued, enjoining strict conformity. The liturgy was also reprinted, with the recent alterations.

Whitgift died shortly after the conference, at the age of seventy-three, having held the metropolitan dignity since the year 1583. Though more severe than his predecessor in exacting conformity, he was still a mild and peaceable man. He was "a holy, grave, and pious man." "He expired in David's fulness of days, leaving a name like a sweet perfume behind him."* If he was sometimes inclined to severity, he was provoked by the scurrilous and unchristian language of his opponents.

* Wilson's History of James I. in Comp. Hist. vol. ii. p. 665.

The convocation of this year, 1603, prepared and set forth the book of canons by which the church of England is still governed. At the dawn of the reformation, when the power of the pope was transferred to the king, a review of the canon law was contemplated; and till such review should be completed, it was ordained by the statute of the 25th Henry VIII. that the ancient canons should remain in force, provided they were not repugnant to the common law, nor the king's prerogative. An attempt at a revision was made in the reign of Edward, and another in that of Elizabeth, but nothing was effected. The canons of 1603 having never been confirmed by parliament, are not binding on the laity, except so far as they are declaratory of the old. It was decided by Lord Hardwicke, that the clergy, in consequence of their subscription, are bound by the canons confirmed by the king only; but to render them binding on the laity, they must be confirmed by the parliament.* As these canons were not ratified by the two houses, the new ones are not binding except on those who subscribe them. All the ancient canons, on the authority of Henry's statute, are a part of the law of the land. In examining into the legality of any one of these canons, the first point is to ascertain whether it is more ancient than the above statute: the next point is to discover whether it is repugnant to the law of the land or the king's prerogative. If it were in use before the passing of the statute, and be not repugnant to law, it is a part of the law of the land, and, as such, is binding on every Englishman. The statute on which the authority of the canon law rests, was intended only to answer a temporary purpose, namely, to afford the church a body of laws, until a review of the whole ecclesiastical constitution should be completed. This review, desirable as it obviously is, has never been accomplished. Some of the canons are now become

* Burn's Ecclesiastical Law. *Preface.*

obsolete, and others of them are of no force, in consequence of the act of toleration. The charge of persecution is frequently alleged against the church, on account of the canons alluded to: the answer is obvious—they remain with the rest, in the same manner as many obsolete laws remain on the statute-book, unexecuted, though unrepealed. No one questions the general lenity of the English laws in consequence of some obsolete statutes still unrepealed; nor can the church be justly charged with severity on the ground of some of the canons of 1603, which are never enforced.

Soon after Whitgift's decease, Bancroft was translated from the see of London to that of Canterbury. Each succeeding metropolitan was accustomed to frame rules for his province. Bancroft resorted to the usual practice; the clergy who complied with the new canons were unmolested; those who hesitated were admonished; and those who positively refused were suspended; but very few were actually deprived. Neal states that Bancroft silenced or deprived three hundred, while Collier reduces the number to forty-nine. The former probably swells his amount by enumerating all who were admonished, silenced, and deprived; while the latter specifies only those who were strenuous in refusing to comply. At all events, few were actually deprived of their livings. At this time, according to Neal, there were not less than fifteen hundred beneficed puritan ministers within the pale of the church. From an admission of the same author, though not for the reasons stated by him, it is evident that the canons were not enforced with any remarkable strictness. "The bishops were obliged to relax the rigour of the canons for a time, and to accept promises of partial conformity."* This is unwilling testimony; but it proves that the puritans, who merely scrupled at some of the ceremonies, were treated with forbearance by Bancroft. The rigid presbyterians had

* Neal, vol. ii. p. 45.

retired to the continent, where they erected the presbyterian discipline. They had long meditated flight to some foreign land, in order that they might enjoy in exile that liberty which they could not obtain at home. The Brownists also left England about the same time for the continent, where the presbyterians and they were engaged in as fierce a warfare as that by which they had been agitated in England.

The great mass of the puritans still deemed separation unlawful.* If they were silenced in one diocess they formed a ready admission into another. From the various conflicting accounts of this period, it is clear that the case of the puritans, who only partially conformed, was not so severe as is often represented. While, on the one hand, Neal and others complain of their hardships; on the other hand, the opposite class of writers complain of the remissness of the bishops in enforcing uniformity. Some of the bishops, moreover, were inclined to view them with favour; and in the universities they occupied many of the most important posts.

In 1605, however, some of the puritan ministers in Lincolnshire published "An Abridgement" of the points at issue between themselves and the conformable clergy. In this pamphlet the field of controversy is enlarged: the subscribers could join with the church in her doctrines and sacraments, but could not declare their approbation of the ceremonies. They were more scrupulous than the majority of their brethren, but not favourers of the presbyterian discipline: hence they were called brethren of the second separation.

Bancroft died in 1610. His zeal for the church caused the puritans to censure him as a friend to popery, an imputation as groundless as it was cruel. His nature seems to have been somewhat stern. "What Whitgift chose to do

* Neal, vol. ii. p. 51.

with sweetness and gentleness, Bancroft did persevere in with rigour and severity.”*

Abbot was the next metropolitan ; a man of an amiable disposition, and opposed to severe measures against the puritans. The reins of discipline were relaxed during his administration : he never moved a single step beyond the line marked out by the law ; nor did he attend to the complaints relative to the nonconforming ministers, who became more open in their opposition through the archbishop's laxity.

The origin of the court of high commission has already been stated. In the late reign, this court exercised its authority with unusual moderation : in the reign of James its authority was abused, to punish those who questioned the unlimited power claimed by the crown. “ About this time,” says Wilson, “ the high commission began to swell into a grievance.” All who opposed the claims of the sovereign were now classed among the puritans, and were treated as such, though they were as strongly attached to the church as any of the king's subjects. To this mistaken policy on the part of the court are to be attributed some of the subsequent misfortunes : in 1640, many of the parliamentary leaders were political puritans only, their attachment to the church being equal to that of the other party. From this period, therefore, four distinct parties were included in the term puritan : first, the original or moderate puritans, who only scrupled at some of the ceremonies : secondly, the rigid presbyterians, hitherto a comparatively small party, but rendered stronger daily through the mistaken policy of the court, in viewing all as enemies whose political sentiments were not in unison with its own : thirdly, the Brownists, most of whom, however, were departed from the country : and, lastly, the political puritans, who opposed the pretensions

* Wilson's James I. in *Comp. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 665.

of the crown as to the prerogative. The last party was by far the most numerous: and if they and the puritans, properly so called, eventually made common cause, the blame lies with the court, in treating them as puritans in consequence of their political views.

At this time the loftiest notions of the prerogative were maintained at court. Some of the bishops undoubtedly endeavoured to foster the notion in the mind of the sovereign: and, in consequence of their advocacy of those lofty pretensions, a stigma has been infixed upon the church herself. It is, however, neither just nor candid to attribute to the church the actions of the court; nor can the brand of persecution be fixed on the establishment in consequence of the actions of individual members. Attempts are not unfrequently made to lessen the reverence entertained by the people for the English church, by insinuating that her principles are repugnant to liberty, and that, during the reigns of the Stuarts, she was used as an engine of persecution. Such a charge is at once disproved by an examination of her written and recognised formularies.* The terms "pious and judicious" are constantly applied to the puritans, as if piety and wisdom were confined to them alone: while the expressions "illiberal, persecutors, unchristian," are unsparingly heaped upon the episcopalians. Surely, the piety of Hooker, of Herbert, and Bernard Gilpin, was equal to that of the most eminent of the puritans.

It is necessary now to notice the rise of an individual who was destined to act a conspicuous part in this, and especially in the succeeding reign. Laud was a man of an aspiring genius and splendid talents. It has been his fate to be exalted into a martyr by his friends, and debased into a tyrant by his enemies. His pertinacious adherence to those

* However arbitrary may have been the practices of some of the bishops, the church is free from the charge of intolerance as a church. The spirit of the English church was at this time far more tolerant than that of Scotland.

ceremonies which, after his elevation to the episcopal bench, he endeavoured to introduce into the church, at a period when the puritans were become powerful through the lenity of Abbot, probably hastened the bursting of that storm which, for so long a period, had darkened the horizon.

Laud was born October 7th, 1573, "a year," says Heylin, "remarkable for the bustlings of the puritan faction." In 1590 he commenced his university career at Oxford: and, in 1611, was chosen president of St. John's college. At this time the most important offices in the university were held by the puritans, who had been appointed through Abbot's influence. Laud, believing that the king was secretly in his favour, advocated a strict conformity to the rites of the church. In 1616 he was raised to the deanery of Gloucester. It had been the practice, since the reformation, to place the communion table in the most convenient part of the church: consequently there was a variety in the practice. In the chapel royal, however, as well as in some cathedrals, the table was placed at the east end of the chancel, where the altar stood in the time of popery. Finding the table at Gloucester in the middle of the church, Laud obtained the consent of the chapter for its removal into the chancel. He acted in opposition to the views of the diocessan, and his conduct gave great offence to the puritans. He also recommended the choristers to bow the head, not only at their entrance into the choir, but also at their approaches towards the table. It is said that the bishop, Miles Smith, one of the translators of the bible, in consequence of these proceedings, never again entered the cathedral.

In 1621 he was elevated to the see of St. David's. He now laboured to bring all the churches in his diocess into one uniform practice, and to model them after the cathedral at Gloucester. He commenced also a course of severity towards the nonconformists, which raised up against him a host of enemies. Laud silenced some, and admonished

1621
1573
— 480

1625 - others. In this see he continued till after the death of James.

One of the most imprudent acts of this reign was the publication of the Book of Sports. That Laud and his brethren should have sanctioned the declaration, can only be accounted for on the ground of their dislike to the puritans. Several bishops stated their objections, and Abbot prohibited the reading of the declaration at Croydon. It was by no means generally read, except in Lancashire, and was soon forgotten. It was an unfortunate measure: for it prejudiced the king against all who opposed it. He viewed all as puritans who refused to comply, however sound their principles.

There is another act, however, that deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance: it was the new translation of the Bible. Prior to this period several versions were used: but the most common were the Bishop's Bible, and that called the Geneva. After Wicliffe's New Testament, the first edition in English was printed by Tindal, in 1526, on the continent: in 1535 the entire Bible was printed, with a dedication to the king, by Miles Coverdale. This was the first translation of the whole Bible, and the first allowed by royal authority. Two years after, another edition was published, varying but little from the former, bearing on the title-page the fictitious name of Thomas Matthew. It was printed under the superintendence of John Rogers, the first protestant martyr in England. In 1539 this translation was revised by Cranmer, and reprinted by Grafton. These were almost the only English translations until the reign of Mary, when the exiles accomplished another at Geneva. Coverdale, Gilby, Whittingham, Knox, and others, were engaged in this work at the period of the queen's death, and remained behind their brethren for the purpose of completing it. Many editions were published between the year 1560, the date of the first edition, and the year 1616, the date of the last. The next

translation was set forth under the auspices of Archbishop Parker, in 1568: it was called the "Bishop's Bible," and "the Great English Bible." This Bible was set up in churches, and continued in general use until the present translation: while the Geneva Bible was commonly read in private families.

Objections were started by the puritans, at the conference at Hampton Court, against the Bishop's Bible. Fifty-four learned men were therefore commissioned to produce a new translation. The translators were divided into six companies. Their instructions were to follow the Bishop's Bible as closely as the original would permit; to retain the old ecclesiastical names—to omit the use of marginal notes, except for the explanation of Hebrew and Greek words, that could not be briefly expressed in the text—and to notice, in the margin, such quotations of places as shall serve for reference for one place to another.

The various portions of the text were distributed according to the particular acquirements of the divines engaged in the work.* Miles Smith, afterwards bishop of Gloucester, wrote the preface. The fidelity, beauty, and spirit of this translation have never been questioned; and, notwithstanding some few immaterial errors, any attempt at a new translation must be deprecated as pregnant with evil consequences. The work was finished, and the Bible printed in 1611. The version of the psalms still retained in the Book of Common Prayer, is that of the Bible of Tyndal and Coverdale, which was retained in the Bishop's Bible. It could not be expected that the present translation should entirely escape censure; but the charge of episcopalian zeal was reserved for modern times: "Hence," says one writer, "come the terms vestry, vestments, bishops, and bowing at the name of Jesus." One little circumstance will prove the ignorance of the

* Selden's Table Talk, p. 19.

writer of the above quotation ; the Geneva Bible retained the very same words, even bowing at the name of Jesus. This circumstance could not have been known to the writer whose words we have quoted, or he would never have brought such a charge against the authorised translation.

James died in 1626. He was vain of his acquirements, and especially of his theological knowledge. It is probable that his vanity induced him to assemble the conference at Hampton Court, in order that he might display his abilities before the assembled divines. James was not a persecutor, nor could the puritans complain much of their grievances during his reign. One act of severity was sufficient to create a sensation not easily subdued ; a few acts in a diocese were sufficient to originate all the outcries against the bishops of this period. Though they were harassed by Laud and some few of the bishops, they were favoured by Abbot and many of his brethren. The constant complaints of the convocation of the want of conformity are evidences of the general forbearance of the bishops. At the close of this reign the puritans were numerous and powerful. "They gained credit with the people," says Burnet, "as the king and the bishops lost it. They were," he adds, "active in their parishes, but factious and insolent."

With regard to the presbyterians, many of them had, some years before the death of James, departed to the continent ; others contemplated a removal to New England, a measure which was at first prohibited by the court, though at last permission was granted. These men, unlike the puritans, were desirous of a total change in the hierarchy. Mr. Orme, the biographer of Baxter, observes, that "many were not content to stop at Canterbury ; they conceived that the principles of reformation required them to proceed further : they wished to divest themselves of every rag and relic of the mother of abominations." This passage is conceived in the true spirit of intolerant zeal, and dissenting

flippancy. Wilson, a writer by no means unfavourable to the puritans, speaking of the circumstance of the presbyterians leaving the country, remarks, "The blame is not to be laid on the function (*i. e.* of bishops), for some of the bishops in these times were holy men, and great lights to the truth of God."*

The character of James is variously estimated by different writers. May, the parliamentary historian, an authority not likely to give a more favourable opinion than truth and justice required, terms him "A wise and learned prince, of disposition merciful and gracious, excellently provided in that religion which he professed, as the world may find by his extant writings."†

* Wilson's James I. in Const. Hist. vol. ii. p. 695.

† May's Hist. Long Parliament, p. 3.

CHAPTER VII.

CHARLES I.—1625—1638.

CHARLES SUCCEEDS—IMPRUDENT ZEAL OF SOME OF THE CLERGY—LAUD PROMOTED TO LONDON—DIVISIONS AND DISPUTES CONCERNING THE CEREMONIES—SYNOD OF DORT—LEIGHTON AND THE STAR CHAMBER—LAUD CHARGED WITH SUPERSTITION—PRYNNE—ABBOT DIES—LAUD SUCCEEDS—BOOK OF SPORTS—TABLES—STATE OF THE DIOCESES—INCREASE OF PURITANS—KING RESORTS TO A PARLIAMENT—PRYNNE, BURTON, AND BASTWICK.

JAMES was succeeded by his son Charles. Mrs. Hutchinson gives the following picture of the close of the late reign: "The land was then at peace, if that quietness may be called a peace which was rather like the saline and smooth surface of the sea, whose dark womb is already impregnated of a horrid tempest." The calm was indeed as the stillness that precedes the storm. The lofty notions of James respecting the prerogative were inherited by Charles. Abbot at this time occupied the metropolitan chair, and Laud filled the see of Bath and Wells. At the instigation of the latter, instructions were sent to the bishops, to be communicated to the clergy, who were enjoined to stir up the people to contribute to the war in which the king was about to engage in behalf of the king of Denmark. The puritans, without any apparent reason, were offended at these instructions; and as Laud was the adviser of the measure, all their indignation was directed against him. All the actions of Charles and Laud were viewed with suspicion. It is true, that in the subsequent years their conduct was arbitrary, and contributed, in no small degree, towards hastening that ruin in which the church and the state were involved; but their motives were pure. That Laud's zeal was fatal to the king

is evident from the event ; but to assert that they were men of unprincipled characters is to utter a falsehood. If, indeed, their characters had been as black as is represented by their enemies, their subsequent sufferings might have softened the enmity with which their memories have been pursued.

It cannot be denied, that the ill-timed zeal of some of the clergy tended to widen the breach already commenced. Montague, canon of Windsor, a learned man, broached notions savouring of popery ; and Sibthorp, vicar of Brackley, a man neither of learning nor merit, justified, in an assize sermon at Northampton, the unlimited exercise of the royal prerogative. Others of the clergy travelled in the same steps : hence the opinions of these men were attributed to all the episcopal clergy. Abbot refused to license Sibthorp's sermon for the press, thereby incurring the displeasure of the court. Manwaring, rector of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, maintained and asserted opinions in a sermon, that were denounced in the House of Commons as subversive of liberty. The house decreed that he should pay a heavy fine, and be suspended for three years : yet this man was subsequently promoted to the episcopal bench. These ill-judged measures excited an angry feeling in the breasts of the people. From this time the episcopal order itself was viewed with suspicion.

In 1628, Laud was removed to London, in which diocese he still persisted in enforcing the removal of the communion tables into the chancel. Wren of Norwich, and Pierce of Bath and Wells, copied his example. To persist in removing the tables, contrary to the wishes of the people, and in opposition to the received practice, was an act of needless irritation. It was one of the misfortunes of Laud, to cling with ill-timed tenacity to some of the less important ceremonies. His error consisted in enforcing with so much rigour a matter of no importance, in opposition to the views of the majority of the clergy, who were

sincerely attached to the hierarchy. It would have been wiser and safer to have permitted the clergy to exercise their own discretion: had he merely recommended the practice, many would have complied. In 1662, no order was issued relative to the situation of the table; nor is any particular place enjoined either by the canons or the rubric. The rubric merely directs that it be set up in the accustomed place of the church or chancel. This latitude has ultimately produced the most complete uniformity.

Hitherto the majority of the clergy had adhered to the sentiments of Augustin, relative to the divine decrees. At the synod of Dort, the English divines concurred in the sentence pronounced against Arminius. Now, however, the controversy raged in every part of the country. Those individuals who favoured the Arminian opinions were chiefly promoted by the court to the dignities of the church. The catholics were not idle spectators of the controversy, expecting eventual benefit to their own cause from these divisions among the English protestants. In an intercepted letter of a Jesuit to his principal at Brussels, was found the following passage: "Now we have planted that sovereign drug Arminianism, which we hope will purge the protestants from their heresy. I cannot choose but laugh, to see how some of our own cast have accoutred themselves: you would scarce know them if you saw them; and 'tis admirable how in speech and in gesture they act the puritans."*

To put an end to the controversy, a declaration was issued by the king, prohibiting the introduction of the disputed points into the pulpit. The afternoon lectures were also turned into catechisings. The lecturers were ordered^d to conduct divine service in the surplice and hood; and not to preach in cloaks, but gowns; and each bishop was required to give an account of his diocess once a year to the king.

* Comp. Hist. vol. iii. p. 51.

These instructions were drawn up by Laud, and undoubtedly were aimed at the puritans, of whom many had remained in the church as lecturers. These lecturers only exercised the office of preaching; they had no cure of souls: now, however, a cure of souls was necessary to the exercise of the ministerial office. Some of the puritans in the dioceses of those bishops who were favourable to the instructions were not a little harassed, sometimes for preaching on the disputed points, at other times for omitting the ceremonies.

The case that excited most observation was that of Leighton, father of the archbishop. As a Scotchman, he was a violent presbyterian. He had written a work—"Zion Plea against Prelacy," in which the bishops are styled "men of blood," their "prelacy antichristian and satanical," and kneeling at the sacrament, a "spawn of the beast." The author recommends smiting the bishops under the fifth rib. The style of the book proves its author to have been a man of unbounded violence; and if his sentence was severe, his offence was not trivial. He was sentenced to lose his ears, to pay a fine of one thousand pounds, and to be imprisoned for life. This sentence, harsh as it was, was carried into effect as to the former part, and the latter was prevented only by the long parliament in 1640. The odium fell chiefly on Laud, who sat in the star chamber with the other judges.

In the consecration of the church of St. Catherine Creed, in London, Laud had introduced certain ceremonies offensive to the people. The charge of popery was repeated; and, some years after, these things were exhibited against him at his trial. At the same time the cathedral of St. Paul's was undergoing a repair; and, to complete the work, it was necessary to remove some of the surrounding houses. Though a fair compensation was awarded to the owners, the action was considered as an additional proof of Laud's arbitrary intentions.

Sherfield, recorder of Salisbury, and a bencher of Lincoln's Inn, was prosecuted in the star chamber for removing or defacing a window in the church of St. Edmund's, in New Sarum. The painting was a representation of the creation. To express God the Father, several little old men were painted in blue coats, and at the end of each day's work was placed one of these little old men: at the end of the seventh day's work, the old man was painted in a sitting posture, to represent God's rest. Sherfield argued, that it was lawful for the vestry to remove these paintings, having been overlooked by the visitors in the days of Elizabeth. Sherfield, however, was fined 500*l.* and removed from his office.

In 1632, Prynne was brought before the same court, to answer for publishing a book, called *Histrio-Mastic*, in which he denounces the appearance of women on the stage. One of the references in the index is, "Women actors notorious whores." It appears that the queen had acted a part in a pastoral not long before. As Prynne was obnoxious to the court, this and other passages were selected as the ground of a charge of libel on the queen. He was sentenced to lose his ears, and to be imprisoned for life. These severities were attributed to Laud, and served to render his name detestable in the estimation of the people. Had Prynne's book been suffered to remain unnoticed, both it and the writer would have been forgotten: the prosecution caused the people to read the book, while the author was elevated into the rank of a martyr.

Abbot died in 1633, and Laud was appointed to succeed him. Abbot was a peaceable and moderate man, but remiss in enforcing the discipline of the church. By his remissness, the puritans were encouraged in their nonconformity. At the period of Abbot's decease, the clergy, except in those diocesses where bishops were vigilant in enforcing order, acted nearly as they pleased. As soon as Laud was seated

in the chair of Canterbury, he began to correct the abuses that had sprung up under his predecessor. His zeal, however, outstripped his prudence. The clergy had been so long accustomed to follow their own inclinations in conducting public worship, that their irregularities were viewed as privileges. When the archbishop began to enforce throughout his province that strict discipline which hitherto he had only been able to practise in a single diocese, the clergy and the people naturally contrasted his proceedings with those of his predecessor. The plans, originated at St. David's, and matured at Bath and Wells and in the see of London, were now brought into operation throughout the whole province of Canterbury.

During the Lord Chief Justice Richardson's progress through the western counties, many complaints were made by the magistrates and grand juries, of the breach of the sabbath by the common people at the wakes and church-ales. His lordship issued an order for their suppression, which was read by the clergy in the churches. Laud, who disliked the interference of the civil power in such cases, complained to the king, and wrote to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, to ascertain how the country feasts were observed. The lord chief justice was reprov'd at the council-table, and King James's Book of Sports was revived and published by royal authority. This measure excited more prejudice against the king and the archbishop than almost any other action of the period: indeed, every act of the court seemed calculated to hasten on that ruin which eventually followed. The declaration was to be published in all parish churches by some persons appointed by the bishops, who, in most cases, imposed the task on the clergy. Some read it as the order of their superiors, adding the fourth commandment as an antidote; others refused to read it at all. Nor was this refusal confined to the puritans; for many of the conformable clergy were determined to resist. Fuller says, that

the archbishop's moderation " was conspicuous, and that he silenced only those individuals in whom was a concurrence of nonconformities." In other diocesses, many were suspended for refusing to read the declaration.

The ferment relative to the communion tables was unallayed. Laud ordered them to be removed into the chancel, to be enclosed with rails, and the people to approach to receive the elements. This practice, though now universal, was then viewed as a grievance. The cry of superstition, innovation, and popery, resounded throughout the country. On his removal to Canterbury, Laud repaired some of the windows in the chapel at Lambeth, which had been defaced at the reformation. For these and similar acts he was charged with a design of reconciling the church of England to that of Rome.

According to the instructions issued by royal authority, the bishops were required to present to the king an annual account of the state of their diocesses. In the archbishop's report for 1633, he intimates that he had heard of many things amiss ; but that he had not yet been long enough in the diocess to correct them. In the diocess of London there were no complaints of nonconformity, nor were there more than two charges from the other diocesses. In 1634, a few avowed separatists are mentioned as dwelling near Canterbury. Salisbury is noticed as overgrown with the humours of those men who do not conform. A few cases of irregularity occurred in the diocess of Lincoln ; in London, one was suspended ; in Llandaff, there was no inconformity, but much superstition and profaneness. In 1635, Laud complains of refractory persons about Maidstone : some were admonished by the bishop of London for breaches of discipline, who promised compliance for the future : one clergyman was suspended in that diocess, for persisting in preaching against bowing at the name of Jesus. In the diocess of Lincoln, the most extensive in the province, one case of noncon-

formity only was reported ; while there were no complaints from Bath and Wells, Oxon, Sarum, Ely, Chichester, St. Asaph, Bristol, Winton, Peterborough, Rochester, and Exeter. In 1636, the archbishop mentions a few poor persons, who were Brownists and separatists : in the diocese of London, a few cases of censure and admonition occurred : in that of Norwich, the bishop states that there are 1500 clergy, and that not thirty are excommunicated or suspended ; of whom some were punished for contumacy, some for refusing to publish the declaration, and others for contemning the rites and orders of the church. The report for the year 1637 is nearly in the same strain ; while in 1638, nothing particular is mentioned. In 1639, Laud complains, that some who had been brought into good order had of late, through the disorders of the times, fallen off. This was the last report delivered to his majesty.

Notwithstanding all Laud's efforts, the puritans increased. It is certain that the proceedings of Laud tended to foster the prejudices of the people. Like the Israelites, the puritans increased in proportion to their oppressions. It is clear from the preceding statements, drawn from the accounts of the different dioceses, that Laud had succeeded, in appearance at least, in correcting some of the irregularities that had sprung up under Abbot : but the peace was a deceitful one—it was only the calm before the storm, a sure presage of violence. The rumbling of the tempest was heard in the distance for some years, and foreboded ruin to the church. Had the primate been warned by the sound, the danger might have been averted : the warning was unheeded, and the church was sacrificed.

Charles fell into the same error as his father respecting the puritans, deeming all to be enemies, whether scrupulous about conformity or otherwise, who did not coincide with the views of the court. A moderate course would have secured the attachment of many, who, from being treated by the

court as puritans, were, of necessity, compelled to unite with that body. The puritans never increased so rapidly as during the first fifteen years of this reign: the cause must be sought in the measures of the court, in branding as puritans all whose political views were opposed to the unlimited exercise of the prerogative. Had Juxon been advanced to the primacy after Abbot, the war might never have occurred.

For twelve years the king governed by the exercise of the prerogative alone, and without a parliament. It became evident, however, in the years 1638 and 1639, that a parliament must, ere long, be assembled. From an English parliament Laud could expect but little mercy: his pertinacity in pressing the Book of Sports had alienated the affections of many, who were by no means disaffected to the church. Even Heylin admits that this was the greatest stain on his character. It ought, at the same time, to be stated, that his conduct regarding the Book of Sports has, as in other cases, been exaggerated. From the preceding accounts it will be seen that few of the clergy were actually suspended for refusing to read it. In some dioceses the bishops were as much opposed to the reading of the declaration as the clergy: in these dioceses, therefore, none were suspended. Yet this, and the other acts mentioned in the preceding pages, were remembered to the prejudice of the archbishop after his fall.

In the year 1637, the severe sentences of the star chamber were pronounced on Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick. The first had, in 1633, been sentenced to perpetual imprisonment: the others had been heavily fined, Bastwick for some reflections on the bishops, and Burton for preaching against the innovations. These men had continued in prison since their former sentence, where they employed their time in writing. Bastwick was charged with writing a pamphlet, entitled "A New Litany:" Prynne with publishing a book, entitled "God's Judgments against Sabbath-breakers:" and Burton with another, called "News from Ipswich." In the work of

Burton, the bishops are styled "false prophets, factors for antichrist, the trains of the dragon's dog-like flattering tail," In Bastwick's indictment it was stated that, in his "Litany," "he had signified, in the name of his wife, who was great with child, his desire that Father William's Holiness, and William London, should be godfathers to his child, not doubting that he should be able to procure the whore of Babylon, with whom he had so long committed fornication, to be godmother." One sentence in the same litany is as follows: "From bishops, priests, and deacons, good Lord, deliver us."

Bastwick's answer at the trial was full of invectives against the bishops: Prynne's was couched in more cautious and moderate terms. Their sentence was a heavy fine, the loss of their ears, and perpetual imprisonment in remote parts of the country. All men exclaimed against the severity of this sentence: the compassion of the people was moved by their sufferings: and the primate's name was loaded with execrations.

Not only was Laud charged with persecution in punishing these men; but the charge was also brought against the church. The church, however, had no concern in the severe sentences, though some of her members may have been implicated. All these things excited the disaffection of the people: and, when the storm burst, Laud was swept away by its violence.

CHAPTER VIII.

1540—1638.

REVIEW OF ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS IN SCOTLAND—REFORMATION—
 KNOX—HE RETIRES TO GENEVA—STRUGGLES OF THE REFORMERS—
 THEY TRIUMPH—VIOLENCE—CHURCH GOVERNMENT—FIRST GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY—EPISCOPACY AND PRESBYTERY—PRESBYTERY FULLY ESTA-
 BLISHED 1592—BISHOPS RESTORED—VISIT OF JAMES, 1617—ARTICLES
 OF PERTH—LAUD AND CHARLES VISIT SCOTLAND.

As the ecclesiastical proceedings of the government in Scotland exercised so material an influence on the affairs of this country, a brief history of the Scottish kirk, from the reformation to the present time, will reflect considerable light on the subjects discussed in this work.

Knox was the father of the Scottish reformation. The popery that had established itself in Scotland was of the worst description. The writings of the continental reformers at length found an entrance into Scotland; and, about the year 1540, Knox became a convert to the doctrines of the reformation. In 1547 he began to preach boldly against the corruptions of the Romish church: his hands were strengthened by the establishment of the reformation in England, and by the accession of several of the nobles to his cause. No attempt was yet made to overturn the ancient system: and it is no small proof of the authority, as well as penetration, of the heads of the party, that they were able to retain the zeal of a fiery and impetuous people, till that critical and mature juncture, when every step they took was decisive and successful.”*

* Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 131.

In 1554, owing to the violent persecutions to which the reformers were exposed, Knox retired to Geneva, from which place he addressed his exhortations to his countrymen. During his exile, the reformation silently gained ground, and the cruelties exercised on the people by the Archbishop of St. Andrews stirred up the protestant lords to enter into an agreement for their mutual defence. In 1557, several of the nobility and others met at Edinburgh, when they entered into a solemn bond to use all their efforts to maintain the word of God and his congregation. This bond was signed by several peers, who were thence denominated "lords of the congregation," and the people who subscribed were called "the congregation." The queen regent was violently opposed to such proceedings, and, in 1559, summoned all the protestant preachers to appear before a court of justice. Knox hastened from Geneva, and joined his brethren at Perth, where he ascended the pulpit, and, by a powerful sermon, stirred up the popular fury to such a pitch that it was difficult to restrain it. At the close of the sermon, a priest was preparing to celebrate mass. This act operated on the already excited multitude as the application of the torch to the train: an indiscriminate attack was commenced on the churches, monasteries, altars, and images—Edinburgh was taken and occupied by the people, by which circumstance the reformers were enabled to dictate their own terms to the queen. Elizabeth also assisted them with troops: and the reformers gained a complete triumph.

It is to be regretted that the people proceeded to acts of violence. All the churches and monasteries in the route of the reformers' army were defaced; the lead, bells, glass, and timber, in many places exposed to sale; registers and libraries were destroyed; and even the sepulchres of the dead violated. The multitude spared nothing that had the appearance of what they termed a superstitious monument. Many of the preachers proclaimed that places in which idols

had been worshipped should be destroyed, and that the sparing of them was offensive to the Deity. Next year the storm burst forth afresh, and its effects were experienced throughout the country in the general devastation committed on ecclesiastical buildings, libraries, and monuments.

The year 1560 is the date of the establishment of the reformation in Scotland. Knox and his brethren presented to the parliament a confession of faith, which was confirmed : and, in the space of a few days, the papal hierarchy was overturned. The popular indignation against the bishops was unbounded : the very function was viewed as a symbol of popery. As Knox had resided on the continent, and had associated with Calvin, he naturally inclined to the Geneva platform : accordingly, the first book of discipline was established, by which presbyteries were elected, and the government of the church intrusted to a general assembly. In England, much of the ancient fabric was preserved : but in Scotland, as in Geneva, the reformation sprang up amid tumults and confusions : hence many things were rejected, which, under other circumstances, would have been retained.

Some of the Scots nobles, moreover, coveted eagerly the lands of the church ; and, by abolishing the order of bishops, they hoped to obtain possession of their wealth. Still, the popish bishops retained their revenues and their dignities, but their spiritual character was lost. Knox, however, did not depart entirely from the spirit of episcopacy ; for, instead of bishops, twelve superintendents were appointed to inspect the lives and doctrines of the clergy, as well as to exercise some other parts of the episcopal office. No provision had yet been made for the clergy : it was agreed that the present incumbents, whether catholic or protestant, should retain possession of their benefices ; that two-thirds of their revenues should be reserved for their own use ; and that the remainder should be annexed to the crown, as a fund from which the protestant clergy should be maintained.

The next general assembly met in 1560. In this assembly the bishop of Galloway was not admitted as a superintendent, until they were convinced that he had been elected by the people. In 1567, the acts of 1560 were confirmed. The bishops still continued to sit in parliament, not as spiritual persons but as temporal barons. There was a body of bishops without any spiritual jurisdiction, while the church was governed by a general assembly. In 1572 a material change was effected. Some of the sees had become vacant, and the nobles, to secure the property annexed, succeeded in preserving the name and the order of bishops. Clergymen were appointed with the name and title of bishop, on consideration of receiving only a portion of the revenues. Douglas, rector of the university, was appointed to the archbishopric of St. Andrew's, while Morton seized upon the property. But even these protestant bishops were subjected to the control of the assembly. The bishops sat in parliament, but had no more spiritual authority than presbyters. Thus episcopacy and presbytery existed in Scotland at the same time; the latter for the government of the church, the former for the purpose of preserving the ecclesiastical revenues.

Notwithstanding the foregoing act in favour of the episcopal order, the very name of bishops was offensive to numbers. In 1578, it was decreed by the assembly that all bishops should submit to their authority on pain of excommunication. Two years after the function was declared to be an unwarrantable usurpation on the freedom of the church: the bishops were ordered to be summoned before provincial synods, and prohibited from exercising even the ministerial office without permission of the assembly. The king felt the restraint of the assembly, and was determined to cast it off. Having summoned a parliament in 1584, it was ordained that the assembly of the church should not be held without the king's permission.

On the following Sunday the magistrates of Edinburgh were commanded to close the pulpits to the ministers, lest they should irritate the people against the obnoxious act. Many of the clergy retired to a distance, not feeling themselves secure in the capital. Next year the most moderate of the clergy admitted that the name of bishop has a special charge annexed to it, and that the prelates were entitled to act as moderators in the presbyteries within their own diocesses. The assembly denied that bishops were more than simple pastors, but permitted the office to remain subject to the jurisdiction of the assembly. In 1592 presbytery was established by act of parliament, and all other acts in opposition to the same were repealed. At this time, therefore, episcopacy was abolished by law, and presbytery legally established. It was at this time that James pronounced his celebrated speech in favour of the presbyterian church. Taking off his hat, he rose and "praised God that he was born to be king of the purest kirk in the world. As for our neighbour kirk of England, they want nothing of the mass but the liftings." The prelates were now deprived of their votes in parliament. Hitherto presbytery had not been sanctioned by parliament, nor could the clergy at any previous period obtain its complete establishment. For the space of thirty years there had been a constant struggle between episcopacy and presbytery. The acts of this year were confirmed in 1594; but they were reluctantly yielded by James, who heartily detested the presbyterian system.

Having given a reluctant consent to the preceding measures, it was natural that James should seize the first opportunity of restoring the church to the state in which it stood prior to the year 1592. The poverty of the clergy opened a door to the king for restoring what was lost. By promising a better maintenance to the ministers, he prevailed on the assembly and the parliament to consent that his

majesty should have power to invest with the office and dignity of bishop, and that such bishops should sit in parliament as the representatives of the clergy. As spiritual persons they were subject to the general assembly; but their seat in parliament depended on the king, who could confer the dignity on any protestant minister. In this state the affairs of the church remained for some years; but the bishops were distinguished from the rest of the clergy by nothing except their seat in parliament. The power of the keys was vested in the assembly, and each bishop was compelled to exercise the office of a pastor in a particular congregation. In 1606, James procured the repeal of the Act of Annexation, by which the bishops were restored to their temporalities, and were denominated lords of parliament. In 1610, the general assembly declared the bishops moderators in the meetings of the kirk; they also voted that all ministers should promise obedience to the bishops as ordinaries. This was a considerable advance towards the settlement of episcopacy. Three of the ministers, who sat as bishops in the Scottish parliament, were consecrated in London by the English bishops according to the service of the English church: on their return they consecrated their brethren. Thus, from 1560 until 1578, the government of the Scottish church was a mixture of episcopacy and presbytery: from the latter period till 1598 presbytery existed alone. From this time moderate episcopacy prevailed until the period of the troubles.

The Scottish bishops were not to be compared either in wealth or importance to their brethren in England. They had a very small ecclesiastical jurisdiction; their sees were moderately endowed; and their dress was a plain black gown. In this state did every thing remain till James's journey to Scotland in 1617. The clergy, in the mean time, were dissatisfied; the restoration of episcopacy was termed a rebuilding of the walls of Jericho; and the pre-eminence

of the bishops, the precedence of Dagon. The worship of the church was also presbyterian in its aspect; neither canons nor liturgy had yet been attempted. The real object of the royal visit in 1617 was to effect some still further changes in the church. On his arrival at the capital, the services at the royal chapel were conducted according to the English ritual, and with the obnoxious surplice. But the grand attempt at assimilating the Scottish worship to that of the English church was reserved for the following year. In the assembly held at Perth, the celebrated five articles, since known by the appellation of the "Articles of Perth," were proposed and carried. They were, 1. Kneeling at the sacrament; 2. Private communion; 3. Private baptism; 4. Confirmation by the bishop; 5. The observation of a few of the chief festivals.

Unimportant as these articles may appear in the present day, they were viewed with horror by the Scots, who could discover in them nothing but popery. Though the ministers were enjoined to practice the new ceremonies, conformity was very rare. In 1621 these articles were also ratified by authority of parliament. Some of the clergy felt the weight of episcopal authority, being suspended from their office. Nothing further was attempted during the reign of James.

Charles was no less zealous than his father for the establishment of episcopacy in Scotland. Laud was ordered to correspond with the Scottish bishops on the subject of a book of canons and a liturgy, two measures contemplated by James, though never carried into effect. In 1633 the king visited his Scottish dominions, Laud accompanying him: at which period "the advancement of the great work of uniformity went forward, like the building of Solomon's Temple, without the noise of axe or hammer."* In the chapel at Holyrood the cathedral service had been used for some time: during

* Heylin's Laud, p. 251.

this visit Laud preached in the royal chapel. Charles and the primate disliked the naked simplicity of the Scottish worship, without ceremonies or a liturgy; but the attempt to introduce them at this time was deemed by the Scottish bishops too hazardous an experiment. They recommended that the English service book should not be imposed, lest the nation should be offended, but that a new book should be framed. The bishops were accordingly commissioned to frame a liturgy for the Scottish church.

During the king's visit he erected a new episcopal see at Edinburgh, a measure very distasteful to the people, who thought that they already had too many bishops.* The prelates, however, even now had but little influence with the people; they could not regulate their own cathedrals, nor could they often venture to assume the episcopal habits. To increase their power several of their body were made privy councillors, a proceeding that rendered the order still more obnoxious to the country.

Soon after the king's return, instructions, at the instigation of Laud, were sent to Scotland, regulating the worship of the chapel royal. It was enjoined that prayers should be read twice a-day, according to the English liturgy, until another should be provided; that the sacrament should be received kneeling; and that the dean should attend divine service in the surplice.†

From this period the ecclesiastical proceedings of the two nations were so closely connected, that it will be unnecessary to notice those of Scotland separately. The preceding sketch will furnish the reader with a knowledge of all the leading facts in the history of the Scottish church, from the reformation till the year 1638.

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 67.

† Rushworth, vol. ii. p. 169.

CHAPTER IX.

1638—1640.

LAUD HATED BY SCOTS—CANONS FOR SCOTLAND—LITURGY—TUMULTS AT THE READING OF LITURGY—PROTEST OF SCOTS—TABLES—ENTER INTO A COVENANT—CANONS AND LITURGY REVOKED—ASSEMBLY—DIS-SOLVED, YET CONTINUES ITS SITTINGS—EPISCOPACY ABOLISHED—CHARLES RESOLVES TO REDUCE THE SCOTS—MARCHES NORTHWARDS—A PACIFICATION BETWEEN THE TWO ARMIES.

THE proceedings in Scotland had, if possible, rendered the name of the primate more odious there than in England. To him the Scots attributed the canons and the liturgy. Two years elapsed before the canons were finished, or at all events before any attempt was made to impose them on the clergy. "What had passed at the king's being there had left bitter inclinations and unruly spirits in many of the popular nobility; who watched only for an opportunity to inflame the people."* Hence two years elapsed before any thing was prepared to be submitted to the king; and then they inverted the proper method, and first presented a body of canons to precede the liturgy, which was not yet ready, they choosing to finish the shorter work first.† The absurdity of publishing the canons before the liturgy, the latter being sanctioned by the former, was disregarded by the Scottish bishops. When the book was sent to the king, Laud, Juxon, and Wren were ordered to review it, in order to render it as much as possible like the English canons. As soon as the task was completed, the book was sent into Scotland. The canons were never submitted to the assembly, which Clarendon calls a "a fatal inadvertency." The noble historian

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 84.

† Ibid. p. 85.

seems to lay the blame on the Scots bishops, who were instructed by Laud to do nothing contrary to law. "It was," says he, "the unhappy craft of these bishops to get it believed by the king that the work would be grateful to the nobility, clergy, and people."* Some of them enjoined a compliance with the liturgy, which was not published till more than a year after the canons.

After the publication of this book the Scots bishops were busied in the preparation of the liturgy. It was at length completed, and forwarded to his majesty, who submitted it to Laud and Wren for revision: after some few alterations it was ratified by the king. In the Scots book the psalms were those of the last translation. In most respects it resembled the English liturgy. It was sent into Scotland with a royal proclamation, dated December 12, 1636, enjoining its use in all churches. It was ordered to be read for the first time on Easter Sunday, 1637, by which day every parish was to provide two copies for the use of the churches. "There was the same affected and premeditated omission as had been in the preparation and publication of the canons: the clergy not at all consulted, and, which was more strange, not all the bishops acquainted with it; which was less censured afterwards, when some of them renounced their function, and became ordinary presbyters, as soon as they saw the current of the time."† Charles acted with less prudence than James, who submitted the five articles to the assembly, and got them ratified. The bishops imagined that the clergy could not be trusted; and therefore the king imposed the liturgy by royal edict.

The council of Scotland recommended that the imposition of the book should be delayed beyond Easter, in order that the people might be better prepared to receive it. Accordingly, the 23d of the following July was fixed instead of

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 84.

† Ibid. pp. 86, 87.

Easter-day. On that day the members of the council assembled in the cathedral, in the presence of a very numerous auditory. On the previous Sunday due notice had been given; but the people gave no indication of that feeling which burst forth on this memorable day. "No sooner had the dean opened the book, but there were among the meaner sort (especially the women) clapping of hands and hideous execrations and outcries."* When the dean appeared first in the desk, arrayed in the surplice, no movement was discovered among the people; but before he proceeded very far an old woman, Janet Geddes, started up, and vociferating, "Villain, dost thou say mass at my lug?" threw the stool on which she had been seated at the dean's head. Her example was followed by others, till the tumult became general: the desk was attacked by these amazons, and the dean was compelled to desist. The future war was ushered in by this old woman, whose memorable act is still preserved in the proverb,—

"That when a woman scolding mad is,
We call her daft as Jenny Geddes."

An attempt was made by the Bishop of Edinburgh to appease the multitude, but in vain. The magistrates then interfered, and having succeeded in removing the war outside the church by forcing out the authors of the tumult, the dean proceeded with the liturgy. The war, however, was carried on outside, the rabble breaking the windows, and exclaiming, "A Pope, a Pope, Antichrist, stave him." "Such a tumult," says Baillie, "was never heard of since the reformation." At the end of the service the bishop and council departed at the hazard of their lives. In the afternoon the service was performed in quiet, the magistrates having adopted measures to prevent the outrage of the morning.

None but the veriest rabble appeared to take part in the

* Rushworth, vol. ii. p. 299.

affray; but it is clear that they were instigated by others. Laud's name was held in abhorrence in Scotland; the sufferings of Prynne and his companions were the constant theme of conversation; and from these and other causes the multitude were wound up to the highest pitch of excitement. On the petition of the people, the further reading of the liturgy was suspended by the council, until an answer should be received from his majesty. When the particulars of the uproar were known in London, Laud censured the council for suspending the use of the liturgy. The ministers now stated their objections to the book. For a time all remained quiet, the people being occupied in the country in gathering in the harvest; but as soon as the harvest was terminated, the people flocked to Edinburgh in vast numbers. Proclamations were issued against tumultuous assemblages: while, on the other hand, petitions against the liturgy were presented by the people. In February, 1637-8, the king issued a proclamation against the late tumults. This proclamation gave rise to a protest signed by many barons, ministers, and burghers; in which they express their decided disapprobation of the service book, declaring that its imposition, without the concurrence of the general assembly and parliament, was unlawful.

Being apprehensive of further commotions, the council permitted the protestors to nominate some of their number as their representatives. Hence originated the celebrated tables: celebrated, inasmuch as from them emanated the still more celebrated covenant. These tables were four in number: one of the nobility,—another of the gentry,—a third of the boroughs,—and a fourth of the ministers. There was also a general table, consisting of commissioners deputed by the four. Almost their first act was the framing of a covenant, so called from one part of it, by which the parties were banded together in defence of the principles of the reformation. A similar declaration was signed in 1580 by

the king and his family, and again in 1590. It consisted at this time of three parts: the first contained the old covenant of 1580; the second enumerated all the acts of parliament since that year in defence of the reformation; the third was an application of the old covenant to their present state.

The Marquess Hamilton was sent by the king to prevail upon the people to renounce the covenant. The marquess promised that nothing should be attempted with the new liturgy except by lawful means: with this promise the covenanters were dissatisfied. Nothing short of a revocation of the canons and liturgy would satisfy them. The marquess, finding that he had undertaken a difficult task, repaired to London. He returned with new instructions; but, as the book was not recalled, these were as unsatisfactory as the former. The demands of the Scots also had increased: they now called for a general assembly and a free parliament; the entire abolition of episcopacy; the repeal of the articles of Perth; and the universal imposition of the covenant. The marquess requested twenty days to allow him to procure new instructions. It was agreed that, in the event of his not returning by the appointed day, the sects should be at liberty to convoke the assembly. The marquess, however, returned with a commission to set aside the canons, the liturgy, and the articles of Perth; to abolish the high commission; and to call a general assembly and a free parliament. Episcopacy was, however, at any hazard, to be retained.

The assembly met on the 21st November, 1638, the marquess sitting as commissioner from the crown. After seven days of fierce debate against episcopacy, the commissioner dissolved the assembly. A protest was immediately issued, in which it was urged that the king cannot legally dissolve the assemblies of the church. The assembly, therefore, continued its session; all the acts passed in six preceding assemblies were declared null; episcopacy was abolished; the canons, liturgy, and articles of Perth, con-

demned ; and presbytery restored to its former footing. The bishops were deposed ; some were excommunicated ; and two only were permitted to exercise the office of presbyters. The clergy added fuel to the fire, by denouncing the bishops as enemies to religion. Troops were immediately levied ; and the pulpit was used by the ministers to instigate the people to war. Some of the clergy affirmed, that divine wrath would not be appeased until the twice seven prelates were hanged up before the Lord, as the seven sons of Saul in Gilgal : and one minister, in his sermon, gave utterance to the pious wish, that the king and all the bishops were at sea in a bottomless boat.*

Charles was not prepared to yield to their demands ; but was resolved to reduce them to obedience by force. The Scots were not idle ; and, viewing the war as a religious contest, the people engaged in it with eagerness. In the following spring the king marched northwards. Early in the summer, the two armies met at Berwick, gazed at each other, and a pacification was effected in June 1639. By the terms of the treaty, both armies were to be disbanded. “The king justly performed the articles ; but the Scots kept part of their forces in a body, and all their officers in pay.”† When Traquair, the royal commissioner, arrived in Edinburgh during the summer, he discovered that the conditions of the treaty had not been observed. In August the assembly met. As the last assembly was of dubious authority, in consequence of sitting after the dissolution, all their acts were confirmed in the present. Before the assembly separated, they received the abjuration of one of the Scottish bishops, who expressed his sorrow for having embraced episcopacy, believing it to be unwarranted by the word of God.

The parliament also met on the day appointed. They

* Rushworth, vol. ii. p. 582.

† Whitelock, p. 29.

were preparing to confirm the acts of the assembly, when they were prorogued by Traquair till the 2d of June, 1640. Such was the posture of affairs in Scotland at the period at which we have arrived in our narrative.

CHAPTER X.

1640,

A PARLIAMENT—GRIEVANCES—PARLIAMENT DISSOLVED—CONVOCATION—
NEW CANONS—OUTCRIES—KING ASSEMBLES ANOTHER ARMY—IT IS
DEFEATED BY THE SCOTS—A TRUCE—PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLES, NOVEM-
BER 3D—GRIEVANCES—CHARACTER AND VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF
THIS PARLIAMENT—VIEWS OF THE CLERGY—HOSTILITY TO LAUD.

THE year 1640 was pregnant with evils for the English church. In December 1639, writs were issued for the assembling of a parliament in the following April. For twelve years had Charles governed by the exercise of the prerogative. At length, after various unsuccessful attempts to procure money for the exigencies of the state, the king found it necessary to call a parliament. They met in April 1640. This assembly was composed of men friendly to the church, but determined to obtain a redress of their grievances. Though friends of the monarchy, the members were, nevertheless, convinced that it was necessary to check the sovereign in his unconstitutional career. To effect this object, they resolved on stopping the supplies until their grievances were redressed. It would have been difficult, under all the circumstances, to have found a body of men who would not have acted in a similar manner. The king expected a strong expression of their resentment against the Scots; but the parliament were intent on securing their own privileges. He wished the Scottish affairs to take precedence of all others; while the members were deter-

mined to consider grievances first. Instead of adopting the suggestion of the king, they listened to petitions complaining of ship-money, monopolies, and the high commission. Pym commented on these petitions in a long speech: the king, irritated at the delay, sent a message by Secretary Vane, intimating his willingness to abolish ship-money on condition of their granting twelve subsidies, to be paid in three years. It is said that Vane mentioned the twelve subsidies for the purpose of irritating the commons against the king, who had, in fact, only asked for six. To this message the commons replied, that they would return an answer to-morrow. The king, imagining that their object was to gain time, adopted the sudden and fatal resolution of dissolving them.

That Charles acted unwisely, is admitted by his friends. Clarendon acknowledges that he was immediately sorry; though he published a declaration justificatory of his conduct. He even consulted with his advisers, whether he might call them together by proclamation. Various persons are mentiond, by different writers, as the authors of this fatal step. Clarendon attributes it to Vane, Whitelock to Laud, and Dugdale to the queen.

The convocation had usually assembled with the parliament; separating when the parliament was dissolved. By the statute of Henry VIII. the time of their sitting is restricted to the period of the session of parliament. Charles, however, granted a new commission; and the convocation continued to sit: they were empowered to revise the old canons, and to make new ones. The judges were, however, consulted on the legality of the proceeding, who decided that the convocation might be continued till dissolved by the king's writ. One of the members reminded Laud of a precedent in the year 1586, when Elizabeth continued the convocation after the dissolution of parliament. Still, all reasonable men deemed the practice unconstitutional.

Seventeen new canons were framed, and almost unanimously adopted. The communion table was ordered to be placed at the east end of the chancel, where the altar formerly stood; and all persons were commanded to repair to their parish churches. But the most offensive canon was the sixth, containing the celebrated *et cætera* oath. It contained the following clause: "Nor will I ever give my consent to alter the government of this church by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, &c. as it stands now established, and as by right it ought to stand, nor yet ever to subject it to the usurpations and superstitions of the see of Rome." It was objected, that no one could tell what was included in the *et cætera*. In the present day, the force of the objection is not easily seen: it cannot be alleged that the *et cætera* could be construed to mean any offices that the court might choose to appoint, because the next words, "as it stands now established," fix the meaning and extent of the oath. Having completed the canons, the convocation was dissolved one month after the parliament.

The loudest outcries were raised against the new canons. Many of the clergy refused to take the oath. Bishop Hall seems to have taken the true view of the objectionable canon: he explained the *et cætera* clause to mean, "As I do allow the government by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, so I will not, upon the suggestion of any factious persons, go about to alter the same." Laud, however, at his majesty's request, commanded the bishops to forbear the imposition of the oath till the next convocation. It was unwise, at such a period of excitement, to impose new ecclesiastical constitutions. This convocation "did many things which, in the best of times, might have been questioned, and therefore were sure to be condemned in the worst, and drew the same prejudice upon the whole body of the clergy, to which, before, only some few clergymen

were exposed.”* One of the worst consequences of these canons, was the disunion caused thereby among the clergy. Some ministers were willing, others refused, to take the oath. Baxter declares, that it led him to study episcopacy more deeply than he had ever done. “Thus, the *et cætera* oath, which was imposed on us for the unalterable subjecting us to diocessans, was a chief means to alienate me and many others from it. This oath also stirred up the differing parties (who before were all one party, even quiet conformists) to speak more bitterly against one another than heretofore; and the dissenting party began to think better of the cause of nonconformity, and to honour the nonconformists more than they had done.”† It was objected by many of the clergy, that no particular discipline was necessary to salvation, and that these canons subjected them to that derision which had been cast on the presbyterians, for making discipline a part of the kingdom of Christ.‡ At this time, it is clear the body of the clergy were conformable. These proceedings of Laud and the convocation soured the minds, not only of the clergy, but of the people also, who began to incline towards the Scots, instead of assisting the king to reduce them. One of the new canons related to Brownists, anabaptists, and separatists, against whom excommunication was denounced. It is remarkable, that the same sects are enumerated in the presbyterian ordinance of 1648, as will be noticed in its proper place. In the ordinance, however, death was the ultimate penalty: in the canon, only excommunication.

Having dissolved the parliament before any supplies had been voted, the king, now on the eve of his Scottish expedition, found himself compelled to resort to the nobility and clergy for money to enable him to enter upon the war. The Scots were not idle. Hearing of the king's preparations,

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 116.

† Baxter's Life and Times, p. 16.

‡ Rushworth, vol. iii. p. 174.

they took the field with a large army. The royal forces were defeated on the borders, when the Scots advanced into England, and took Newcastle. Having summoned a council of peers to meet him at York, Charles, in their presence, resolved to summon a parliament to meet on the 3d of the coming November. At the same time, commissioners were appointed to treat with the Scots, and Ripon was selected as a suitable place for the treaty. On the 16th of October, a truce was agreed upon till the 16th December ; and, as the parliament was summoned for the 3d of November, all parties expected a lasting peace. By one article of the truce, it was settled that 850*l.* per diem should be paid by England for the support of the Scots during the treaty. Charles was now in a worse situation than ever: not only had he not chastised the Scots, but they had entered England, and were in a state to dictate terms to the sovereign.

This war originated in the dispute about the rites and ceremonies. Had episcopacy been given up, or even had the king never attempted to impose the canons and the liturgy, all other differences would have been easily adjusted. The king perceived that nothing but a parliament could extricate him from his difficulties ; York, however, should have been the place for the meeting of the two houses. The people in the north were much better affected towards the king than in London. The people looked forward to the meeting of parliament for a redress of their grievances. These grievances, says Hume, without regard to the constitution, were inconsiderable. The evils of the government were unquestionably magnified by the popular leaders, especially after the invasion of the Scots, who were viewed as fellow sufferers under the same load of ecclesiastical impositions.

On the 3d of November the parliament assembled. The cloud had long darkened the horizon ; but few imagined that the church and state would eventually be swept away by its fury. Laud was advised to persuade the king to defer

their meeting for a few days, because the parliament by whose sanction Henry VIII. had seized the property of the church had assembled on the same day. This advice was, very properly, disregarded; yet, in allusion to the day, Heylin remarks, that "this parliament began in the face of Laud, was continued in the dissipation of the rites of the church, and ended in the destruction of episcopacy and monarchy."

Grievances were again the first subject of discussion. No change had taken place in favour of the king: many members felt strongly in consequence of the late sudden dissolution; and the new canons, and the other proceedings of the court, had increased their feelings of dissatisfaction. It will be necessary to pause in the narrative, to take a view of the character of the members of this parliament at the period of their assembling.

The great majority of the members were decided friends to episcopacy, whatever may have been their views of Laud and some of the bishops. They were, however, divided into two parties—rigid and moderate episcopalians. The latter venerated episcopacy, as that form of government which had prevailed in the church from the apostolic age: the former assumed a higher ground, and maintained the *jus divinum* of episcopacy. The one party did not consider episcopacy essential to the constitution of the church: the other asserted that there could be no true church without it. Both were decided friends to the church of England, and, together, they formed a large majority in the two houses.

According to Baxter, whose testimony is most unexceptionable on such a point, there was not one presbyterian in the parliament, nor among the lord lieutenants nor general officers, and that presbytery was known only to a few scholars.* This assertion must be received, however, in a qualified

* Baxter, Part iii. p. 41.

sense. Avowed presbyterians there were none in the house of commons; but the sentiments of some of the members were unfavourable to the English hierarchy. In the country, the presbyterians were few in number. The moderate puritans were rather episcopalian in their views than presbyterian: and if any rigid presbyterians found their way into the commons, they were so inconsiderable in number that they could not carry any measure in the parliament.

There was another party in the house, the independent, concealed at present under the general appellation puritan, which in a few years governed the house and the country. When the parliament assembled, the men who subsequently proved leaders of this party were either conformists or puritans. Their peculiar opinions were never broached in public. They were men of ability, and secretly exerted themselves to widen the breach between the king and the parliament.

It cannot be doubted that the few presbyterians who, under the general name of puritan, found their way into the house, contemplated the overthrow of episcopacy. But they proceeded with caution: they never submitted any proposition to the house calculated to disclose their real sentiments: they silently watched passing events, with the intention of taking advantage of them as they occurred. Had the episcopalians of all grades acted in a similar manner, the church and the monarchy would have been saved.

With the exception of a small number of men of this description, the members, notwithstanding their various shades of opinion, were attached to the church. They were conformists to the ceremonies, and friends to her constitution. Clarendon says they were all members of the established church, and, almost to a man, for episcopal government. It must, however, be observed, that they distinguished between the church of England and Laud, with some of the prelates, towards whom they manifested the bitterest animosity.

The foregoing observations will equally apply to the clergy of the same period: almost all were quiet conformists. Notwithstanding the severities of Laud's administration, the great body conformed, rather than cause a schism in the church. The puritans dreaded the idea of separation, and disclaimed the imputation of schism. Up to this time, therefore, they had contented themselves with protesting against the use of the obnoxious ceremonies. They were as strenuous advocates of uniformity as the bishops: and, had they succeeded in modelling the English church after their own fashion, no deviation would have been permitted from the established practice. "With all their goodness," says Neal, "they were unacquainted with the rights of conscience." At a subsequent period they exercised more severity than the bishops.

Though, therefore, the members of this parliament were friends to the hierarchy, they were hostile to Laud, and opposed to the new canons. It had been the unfortunate policy of Laud to treat all moderate churchmen as puritans and enemies: hence the episcopalians in the parliament united with the puritans, for the purpose of curbing the royal authority and restraining the power of the bishops. To this union must many of the subsequent evils be attributed.

CHAPTER XI.

1640.

DISCUSSIONS AND PETITIONS CONCERNING GRIEVANCES—COMMITTEE OF GRIEVANCES—PRYNNE, BURTON, AND BASTWICK—CHARGES AGAINST SOME OF THE BISHOPS—LAUD IMPEACHED AND IMPRISONED—PETITIONS AGAINST THE CHURCH FROM THE APPRENTICES—DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT—VIOLENCE OF THE PEOPLE—SCOTTISH COMMISSIONERS IN LONDON—PETITIONS IN FAVOUR OF EPISCOPACY—PARLIAMENT MADE PERPETUAL—ATTEMPT TO DEPRIVE THE BISHOPS OF THEIR SEATS DEFEATED—PROTESTATION OF COMMONS—BISHOPS IMPEACHED AS AUTHORS OF CANONS, AND BAILED—HIGH COMMISSION AND STAR CHAMBER ABOLISHED—INFLUENCE OF THE SCOTS—KING VISITS SCOTLAND—ORDINANCE AGAINST SUPERSTITIOUS ORNAMENTS.

THE parliament having assembled, the scene was opened on the 7th of November with the presentation of petitions from Prynne, Burton, Bastwick, and Leighton. The particular grievances of different counties were also stated by the members, in speeches calculated to fan into a flame those sparks of indignation already kindled in the house. The petitions and speeches embraced the long space of the intermission of parliaments. We shall notice only such as bear on the subject of religion. A few extracts from the speeches delivered on the occasion will evince the feelings of the house with regard to the bishops, to episcopacy, and to the ceremonies. "We well know," says Sir Benjamin Rudyard, "how the whole church hath been troubled where to place an altar. We have seen ministers, their wives and families, undone, against law, against conscience, against all bowels of compassion, for not dancing on a Sunday. These inventions were but sieves made of purpose to winnow the best men. They would evaporate the power of religion, by drawing it out into antiquated ceremonies new furbished up. They have so brought it to pass, that, under the name of puritans, all

our religion is branded. Whoever squares his actions by any rule, divine or human, he is a puritan." Pym followed in a similar strain against the new ceremonies, altars, images, pictures, the Book of Sports, and the suppression of the afternoon sermons. Lord Digby uttered similar sentiments. "As representative for the county of Dorset," he observed, "that Dorsetshire was not, like Goshen, in the enjoyment of sunshine, while the rest of the land was overspread with darkness and plagues." Sir John Culpepper complained of the new ceremonies, the canons, and the convocation. Sir Harbottle Grimstone added, that the petitions were so many remonstrances of the grievances of the state: "they would have us swear that the government of the church by archbishops and bishops is *jure divino*; though, whatever may be said for the functions of bishops, 'tis certain their jurisdiction is *humanâ institutione*, and derived from the king."*

These speeches shew the temper of the house. The speakers were all episcopalians. A committee was immediately appointed to draw out of the petitions such a remonstrance or declaration as should fully represent the state of the kingdom. Every day produced fresh complaints against Laud. On presenting a petition from a silenced minister, Sir Edward Deering concluded, "he hoped that by the help of that house, before this year of threats was out, his grace would have either more grace or no grace at all, forasmuch as all their sorrows in the church, and many of those in the commonwealth, lead to him as the centre whence they flow."† Notwithstanding these speeches against the proceedings of the bishops, the house on the 20th November ordered that no member should sit in the house after communion-day, unless he had received the sacrament.‡ As the sacrament was administered then as it is now, no stronger proof can be adduced to shew that the house was composed of churchmen.

* Rushworth, vol. iii. p. 266. May, p. 52, 53.

† Rushworth, vol. iii. p. 270.

‡ Ibid. p. 282.

Soon after a committee was appointed to receive grievances, instead of having them submitted to the whole house. Petitions poured in from all quarters. The obnoxious clergy were charged with offences committed during the last ten or twelve years. Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, were released from prison, and conducted to London, where they were received by an immense concourse of people.

Articles were exhibited in the house of lords against Cosins, master of Peter-house, Wren, bishop of Norwich, Pierce, of Bath and Wells, Montague, and Manwaring, for imposing the late innovations. Cosin was accused of superstition, and of cruelty to Sharp, one of the prebends of Durham, of which cathedral he was dean. It was alleged that he had caused an anthem to be sung to the three kings of Collen,—that he had lighted two hundred candles in the cathedral on Candlemas-day,—that he had erected an altar, and practised many other innovations. Though a great stickler for conformity, yet he so successfully rebutted all these charges that he was not questioned again. The table had been erected long before his connexion with the cathedral,—the pictures of the Trinity never existed,—the image of Christ was the top of Bishop Hatfield's tomb. He never forbade the singing of psalms; and as to the anthem, the doctor, finding it in an old book, had actually cut it out; nor had it been sung during his residence, nor for fifty or sixty years before. The lords were satisfied: but the commons on the 22d December deprived him of his preferments. He was one of the first clergymen deprived by the house. At the restoration he was raised to the episcopal bench.

Wren was another early sufferer. He had been unusually active in imposing the new canons. On the 22d December a petition was presented, embodying all the charges: in the July following he was voted unfit to hold any spiritual promotion; and the king was requested to remove him from his service. He remained unmolested until the period of the

bishops' protest, when he was committed with his brethren. Retiring to his palace in Norfolk, he was forcibly seized by a party of soldiers, committed to the Tower, and detained a prisoner until 1659. He survived the restoration, and was restored to his preferments.

Pierce, of Bath and Wells, had also become obnoxious, in consequence of his zeal in imposing the Book of Sports : after being harassed by the commons, he was deprived with the rest of his brethren. He was restored in 1660, and died in 1670.

On the 16th December the new canons were condemned by the house : and in the February ensuing, Laud, who was their supposed author, was impeached of high treason. The bitterest invectives were uttered against him from the commencement of the session ; and subsequent events proved that the partisans of Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, could persecute as well as the archbishop. His conduct in the late convocation ; his proceedings in the courts of high commission and star-chamber ; and his rigid adherence to the new ceremonies, contributed toward his ruin. He lay in prison nearly two years without further notice. The charges of the commons, together with the consent of the primate, will be noticed in the narrative of his trial. Stafford's impeachment is foreign to the object of this work. It may be sufficient to remark, that the warrant for his execution was reluctantly signed by the king.

In a few weeks the parliament had made rapid strides towards the attainment of their object. Laud was in prison ; and the other obnoxious prelates were under arrest, or removed from the councils of the king. "Without doubt," says Clarendon, "the major part of that body had no mind to make any considerable alteration in the government of church or state."* Say and Brooke were the only peers

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 147.

opposed to the entire fabric of the church. The fears of the commons were aroused by those who were dissatisfied with the hierarchy; and a concurrence of circumstances led the majority afterwards to act in opposition to their recorded sentiments. The hostility to the church began without the walls of parliament. "All was chaste within those walls."* Laud's impeachment was not viewed as an indication of hostility to the hierarchy, nor to the order of bishops, but only as the expression of their detestation of the recent innovations.

Ere long, however, petitions began to pour in not only respecting grievances, but against the very foundation of the church. These petitions were not, indeed, sanctioned by the house; but they were the precursors of that storm which at last burst upon the church, and their very reception was an encouragement to the populace. The first of these petitions came from the London apprentices, and the men of Kent. The London petition was presented as early as December, and the Kentish in January. The petitions strike at the very root of the hierarchy. The petitioners allege, that the government by archbishops and bishops is proved by daily experience to be very dangerous; they pray, therefore, for the total abrogation of the episcopal regimen. It was ordered by the house that the petitions should stand over for the present. On the eighth and ninth of February a long debate ensued on the subject: some were for depriving the bishops of their temporalities; and a few for the total extirpation of the order. Others advocated a reformation of episcopacy, and not its abolition. Lord Digby defended the ancient government of the church, but wished to clip the wings of the bishops. Complaints of abuses, said his lordship, were alleged, and, therefore, the church must be overthrown; as if wine should be entirely prohibited be-

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 160.

cause drunkenness was become epidemical.* Episcopacy, he adds, is so ancient and venerable, so admired by the most learned reformers, "that he cannot think such a close devil should be found in it now at the fag end of 1640." Fiennes vented a long tirade against the bishops, and recommended the reception of the petitions. Sir Benjamin Rudyard wished for a reformation, not the abolition of the order: the Lord Falkland concurred in the same opinion. Sir Harbottle Grimstone agreed that it would be as absurd to destroy the order, because some of the bishops have been guilty of error, as to remove the common law and the judges, in consequence of the crimes of some of the latter. It was decided that the further consideration of the matter should be referred to the committee appointed for the London petition. The utmost that was then wished was the removal of the bishops from the house of lords. Neal admits, that the puritans at present wished for nothing more than the reformation of the hierarchy.†

Not only were petitions against the church multiplied, but in various places the people began to commit all kinds of violence. They tore the surplices, and pulled down the rails by which the communion-tables were surrounded. During the time of service in St. Margaret's Church, before the two houses, the people at the lower end commenced the singing of a psalm during the reading of the communion service. The lords immediately issued an order "that Divine service should be performed according to acts of parliament; and that all who disturbed that order should be severely punished." It was also ordained, "that the clergy should forbear to introduce any offensive ceremonies otherwise than those which were established by law." In Southwark, some few individuals were surprised in a conventicle during the time of Divine service contrary to the statute.

* Rushworth, iii. 357.

† Neal, ii. 429.

They alleged that the statute was made by the bishops, and, consequently, was not binding; and that the king, not being a new man, could not make a perfect law. These sectaries were reprimanded by the lords, enjoined to attend at their parish churches, and threatened with severe penalties if the offence was repeated. At this time, therefore, there was no disposition in the two houses to root up episcopacy.

Still many excesses were committed by the populace, who were encouraged by some few discontented members of both houses. The parliament was disposed rather to connive at these excesses, viewing them only as the ebullitions of feelings long restrained. This apathy, however, on the part of the commons increased the discontent of the multitude, who found that their complaints were listened to in the house. Not only were petitions presented against the bishops, but the clergy were reviled in the streets as popish priests; and the liturgy was termed a quenching of the spirit and a lifeless form. The pulpit was also used by some of the clergy as the vehicle of abuse against the bishops; old pamphlets reflecting on the church were republished; and from many parishes petitions were presented against the clergy, who were charged with bowing at the name of Jesus, with administering the sacrament at the rails, and with practices of a similar nature. At a later period such petitions were received by the house with avidity; but at present their inclinations were in favour of episcopacy.

The Scottish commissioners were spectators, if not abettors, of these proceedings. They had arrived in London in November, where St. Antholin's Church was assigned them for their devotions. Here the celebrated Henderson preached every Sunday: he was also associated with the commissioners in the treaty in all matters of religion. The rough eloquence of Henderson made a deep impression on the audience, composed chiefly of women, many of whom,

to secure their places, remained in the church during the space between morning and evening service. Presbyterian worship was a novelty in England; and as the Scots had just emancipated themselves from the power of the bishops, their mode of worship attracted large assemblies. The Londoners imagined, that as they had also suffered under Laud, they might copy the example of the Scots, whose presence in London countenanced the people in the neglect of the liturgy. Though the Scots had resisted the imposition of the liturgy, they were by no means averse to the imposition of their own system on the English nation. Thus they laboured to infuse into the minds of the people a hatred of episcopacy, and a love of presbytery. To their presence, and the countenance of some few members, are to be attributed the numerous petitions against episcopacy. The treaty advanced but very slowly; and the presence of the commissioners in London had an unhappy influence on the royal cause. The influence of the preachers on the multitude was unbounded; their style and manner were peculiar: nor is it too much, perhaps, to attribute the origin of the extravagance of the subsequent period to the unpolished, eloquence of the Scots. Their sermons, so immoderately long, were imitated by the puritans. The style of the puritans from 1640 to 1660 is very different from that of their predecessors. There is much more purity of style in the writings of the earlier puritans, than in those of the period in question. From this time until the restoration, the sermons of the most celebrated preachers are remarkable for their verbosity, new and singular expressions, and their obscurity.

While so many petitions were presented against the order of bishops, an equal number was presented in favour of the church. In various counties petitions in behalf of the hierarchy were signed by vast numbers of the nobility, gentry, clergy, and commonalty. Some of them were answers to

the root and branch petitions.* It was become necessary for the friends of the established order to muster their strength. Their opponents artfully coupled episcopacy and popery together; and the bare receptions of petitions, thus worded, proves how cautious the commons were in not irritating the people.

The king was induced to consent to the bill for the continuance of the parliament. It was signed on the 10th of March, 1640-41, and was one of the most fatal measures of those eventful times. As long as their existence depended on the will of the king, their measures would of necessity be more cautious. It was provided by the bill that the present parliament should not be dissolved without their own consent.

Hitherto the house had only listened to petitions against the church: now, however, the attempt was made to deprive the bishops of their seats in parliament. A bill was actually proposed, and met with a favourable reception even from the moderate churchmen, who were prejudiced against the bishops in consequence of their alleged severities towards the puritan clergy. Many imagined that such a bill would satisfy the country, and that the bishops, by being confined to the exercise of their spiritual functions, would be better pastors of the church. Hence the bill found an easy passage through the commons: but it was unanimously rejected by the lords. The commons were not hostile to the office of bishop: they wished merely to restrain their power. Many of the commons were irritated by the loss of the bill: and from this period may, perhaps, be traced the origin of those changes which soon occurred in the views of the lower house. Another bill was soon after introduced into the commons by Sir Edward Deering, hitherto a moderate man, for the extirpation of bishops, deans, and chapters, and for the appro-

* See a Collection of Petitions in behalf of Episcopacy. 4to. 1660.

priation of their lands by parliamentary authority. It was read a first time, but at last was laid aside. Deering recommended another scheme, in the event of the reception of his bill, similar, in most respects, to Usher's reduction of episcopacy.

Another bill was introduced affecting deans and chapters; when Dr. Hackel was permitted to defend them at the bar of the house. In June, however, the commons declared that they should be abolished, and their lands employed for the advancement of piety and learning. Two other resolutions of the commons at this period indicate an increasing disposition to change the structure of church government: first, it was resolved, on the 10th of July, "that ecclesiastical power be exercised by commission:" and, secondly, on the 31st of the same month, "that the members of every county return the names of nine persons to be ecclesiastical commissioners." These votes, however, were not pursued: nor was the declaration against deans and chapters, being unsanctioned by the lords, passed at this time into a law. For some time, all the plots against the church were defeated.

In consequence of a rumour of a conspiracy against the parliament, the commons framed a protestation, to be taken by all their members. Each member engaged to defend the true reformed protestant religion, as expressed in the thirty-nine articles, against popery and innovation. It was adopted on the 3d of May: and, in a fortnight afterwards, on the expression of some doubts relative to the meaning of the above words, the house declared that the doctrine of the church was alone intended, and that the words were not to be extended to discipline. In its original state the protestation appeared favourable to the church: probably the presbyterians thought so too; for the explanation originated with them. The lords concurred in this protestation. The commons wished to impose it on the whole country: but the lords objected to its imposition. The commons were indignant at

the opposition of the lords, and, conceiving the bishops to be the cause, they immediately adopted the resolution to impeach them, as the authors of the late canons.* Revenge dictated this step: and the commons knew that it would tend to diminish the respect paid to the order, and prepare the way for its ultimate suppression. The bishops were admitted to bail by the lords, and here the matter terminated.

Two of the principal grievances were the courts of high commission and star chamber. The latter “had overflowed the banks that should have contained it.”† The same authority adds, that “he does not know that any innocent clergyman suffered.” The bill for the suppression of these courts received the royal assent in June: the courts were viewed as a grievance by the people; and it was insinuated that the clergy alone were the judges. Such assertions were not founded in truth: “men cry out upon the high commission, as if the clergymen only had to do in it, when I believe there are more laymen in commission there than clergymen. So of the star chamber, the people think the bishops only censured Prynne and Bastwick, when there were but two there, and one spake not in his own cause.”‡ The bishop who did not speak was Laud, whose memory is loaded with the odium of the sentence, whereas he only defended himself from the charges in the libels.

It has already been stated that the two armies continued embodied in the north. In the month of August this year, 1641, the affairs of the two countries were adjusted, and the two armies were disbanded. This treaty was evidently protracted by the English parliament, who wished to humble the king. The Scots were designated “our brethren of Scotland:” even the moderate members perceived that the presence of their army would be of essential service in bringing the king to terms. The temper of the house was

* Rushworth, vol. iv. p. 134.

† Clarendon, vol. i. p. 222.

‡ Seldeniana, p. 41.

seen by the presbyterians, who failed not to improve the circumstance to their own advantage. Encouraged by the Scots commissioners, they proposed and carried several points of considerable importance. The episcopal party saw, that by losing the aid of the Scots, their whole cause might be marred. Thus, from a fear of losing all, they yielded points which, under other circumstances, would have been viewed as pregnant with danger. This fear induced the commons to sacrifice the bishops. It is said that they were fearful lest the bishops should oppose moderate measures, and drive matters to extremities. Hence, their conduct was a mixture of friendship and hostility to the church. In June of this year, two persons were fined, pillored, and imprisoned, by the peers, for interrupting the celebration of the communion. Similar instances occur in the proceedings of the commons. Hence, it is evident that their desires to reduce the king led them at length into measures which were not originally contemplated.

The king proposed a visit to Scotland this summer, and the commons were urgent for him to remain. They actually sent on Sunday, the 8th of August, in consequence of the king's projected departure on the 10th. Charles, however, arrived in Edinburgh, and on the 19th August confirmed all their acts against episcopacy. He wished to heal the divisions among his Scottish subjects. It had been his misfortune to attempt to impose upon that people a mode of worship, in their estimation, no better than popery; and he now wished to remove their unfavourable impressions. The attempt to impose the liturgy was one of the worst measures of this reign: it soured the minds of the Scots, and, by uniting them with the English puritans, enabled the latter to resist the government: it brought the Scots into England, and surrounded the throne with difficulties. Scotland, says Whitelock, was the "fountain whence the ensuing troubles sprang." During this visit

the king granted all their demands ; but the mischief was too great to be easily rectified.

The parliament continued its session after the king's departure. During his absence, the disaffected members used their utmost efforts to influence the house and the country against the hierarchy. In September, they engaged in a debate about altering the liturgy ; but by the opposition of Hyde, the measure was defeated. A vote had previously been recorded against bowing at the name of Jesus, crosses, and the setting up rails around the communion tables. As early as the 23d January, an order was issued by the commons for commissioners to proceed into every county to deface all monuments of superstition, and to remove altars, images, pictures, as relics of idolatry, from all churches and chapels. At this time, several similar votes were entered in the journals. The communion tables were ordered to be removed from the chancel into the body of the church, the rails to be taken away, and the chancels levelled ; all pictures and crosses to be abolished. As the peers had declared for the reverent use of the common prayer, the commons solicited a conference with the upper house : they refused to concur in the votes of the commons, and repeated their former order. Both houses adjourned September 9th, 1641, leaving a committee to sit during the recess.

CHAPTER XII.

1640—1641.

KING RETURNS—ORDINANCE AGAINST SUPERSTITION EXECUTED—BISHOPS
ATTACKED BY THE RABBLE—THEIR PROTEST—ARE IMPEACHED—COM-
MITTED TO THE TOWER—KING ATTEMPTS TO SEIZE THE FIVE MEMBERS—
KING RETIRES FROM LONDON—BISHOPS EXCLUDED FROM THE PEERS.

CHARLES returned from Scotland in November, after an absence of some months. He was magnificently entertained by the city of London. At this time, no laws had been enacted against the church ; but the liturgy, discipline, and ceremonies, remained unaltered.

After a short recess, the parliament met on the 10th October. Their first act was to receive the report of the committee. Pym, the chairman, reported that they had sent several of their number to superintend the execution of the orders of the house ; and that in some places they found good ministers ; in others, those of an opposite character. This committee ordered the churchwardens to see that their order was published and executed. Posterity will smile at the very idea of an order of parliament against bowing at the name of Jesus. The innovations introduced by Laud were of little importance, except as involving the question, whether a bishop had the power to introduce new ceremonies ; certainly they did not require a parliamentary order to suppress them. Still, the majority of the two houses were even yet far from contemplating the destruction of episcopacy, nor did the puritan clergy require more than exemption from the obnoxious ceremonies. The presbyterians were yet few in number in the commons ; but they were ready to seize the first opportunity to discover their real character.

So strongly was the current of popular opinion in favour of the church, that the commissioners, to whom the execution of the parliamentary orders were intrusted during the recess, were prevented in some places from carrying their orders into effect; but in others the people proceeded to acts of great violence. The rabble, indeed, who in every place are ever ready for the work of destruction, cheerfully executed the orders of the commons, and in many instances outstripped their employers. In some places they disturbed the service, interrupting the minister in the desk or at the altar: in others they destroyed the books and surplices. The parliament did not sufficiently restrain the rabble; the members were divided in sentiment on the subject: some thought it better to permit the people to proceed to excesses, than to restrain them; others asserted that by such practices they should lose the support of the country gentlemen, who were well affected to the church, though opposed to the recent innovations. Amid this diversity of opinion, the common people perpetrated many acts of violence; but the sober and reflecting portion of the community were in doubt whither all these proceedings would tend.*

During the king's absence the Irish rebellion broke out. Some writers have ventured to throw out suspicions, as if Charles had given his sanction to the rebels. A more unfounded or a more cruel report was never circulated. The rebel leaders used the king's name, but no unprejudiced person will charge the guilt of that horrid massacre on Charles. This rebellion, however, tended to foster the prejudices already existing against the king.

Several bishoprics were now vacant; and the king proceeded to fill them up. This proceeding gave offence, as if his majesty would have been justified in permitting the sees to remain unoccupied, while the church continued to be established by law.

* May, p. 77.

Though Charles had made greater concessions than any preceding sovereign, yet the parliament was dissatisfied. Some months before, a committee had been appointed to draw up a remonstrance on the state of the country: the business dropped for a time, but was now revived with great heat. The remonstrance was prepared, and debated on the 22d November. Sir Edward Deering's speech is remarkable, as shewing the sentiments of many members who occasionally joined in the votes against the bishops. Sir Edward had introduced a bill for extirpating bishops, deans, and chapters; yet this same gentleman, in opposing the remonstrance, and in answering the charge of idolatry, stated that the bishops of Durham, Lincoln, and Exeter, had been vigorous and successful opposers of popery; and that none had ever charged those of London, Winchester, Chester, Carlisle, and Chichester, with superstition, much less with idolatry. After a long debate, from three in the afternoon till three the next morning, the remonstrance was carried by a majority of nine voices.

This celebrated remonstrance was a kind of declaration on the state of the country: all the grievances, real or imaginary, of the kingdom were enumerated. The whole of this reign was ransacked for abuses; and almost every action of the king was distorted into an offence against the liberty of the subject, or the freedom of religion. Even Whitelock admits that "it was roughly penned." Not only were the errors but the misfortunes of Charles recapitulated. It was presented to the king in December 1641. In these pages the religious grievances will alone be noticed. It commenced with an allusion to the dangers by which the country was surrounded, and which are attributed to his majesty's evil counsellors. The bishops and clergy are attacked for upholding ecclesiastical tyranny and superstition. A design of introducing popery is also charged upon the prelates, who are represented as having suppressed the spirit and power of

religion; the spread of Arminianism; the exaggerating and magnifying the differences between the puritans and other protestants; the introduction of such new ceremonies as are most likely to countenance popery,—are some of the heavy charges against the bishops, and other advisers of his majesty. It alludes in terms of severity to the oppressions of the star chamber,—to the suspensions, excommunications, and deprivations of the high commission. All the particulars connected with the introduction of the canons and liturgy into Scotland are recorded with the utmost minuteness: and the canons of 1640 are reprobated in the strongest terms.

The commons had failed, before the recess, to procure the consent of the lords to their bill for the exclusion of the bishops. This circumstance is alluded to in the remonstrance. The commons ask what they can do without the lords? and what can be expected from the upper house as long as the prelates remain? They charge the bishops with persuading the people that they intend to abolish all church government: this they deny, and then state that their intention was only to reduce the exorbitant powers of the bishops; that for this purpose they had passed the bill for removing them from their temporal employment, in order that they might the better apply themselves to their spiritual functions. “We do here declare,” it is added, “that it is far from our purpose or desire to let loose the golden reins of discipline, to leave private persons or particular congregations to take up that form of divine service they please: for we hold it requisite that there should be throughout the whole realm a conformity to that order which the laws enjoin.” They then state their wish to remove the superstitious ceremonies; to suppress innovations; to demolish monuments of idolatry; and to call a synod of divines to consult together for the safety of the church. Such are the religious grievances embodied in the remonstrance. At this time even the commons only contemplated the removal of the bishops from the peers,

and the retrenching of alleged abuses ; — yet, in a few months, this very house of commons commenced a series of attacks upon the church, which did not cease until the hierarchy was destroyed.

A petition accompanied the remonstrance, in which the commons beseech his majesty to concur with them in removing the bishops from the lords, and in correcting ecclesiastical abuses. In his reply, the king expresses his readiness to concur with them in removing any illegal innovations, and even to call a national synod if the parliament deem it desirable. The king also published a declaration to the whole kingdom, to counteract the ill effects of the remonstrance, that without his majesty's permission had been circulated in every part of the country. In this declaration the king expresses his attachment to protestantism, and his readiness to correct abuses. It proceeded from the pen of Hyde. "I cannot think," says an able author, "that the temperate and constitutional language of the royal declarations, and answers to the house of commons, known to have proceeded from the pen of Hyde, and as superior to those on the opposite side in argument as they were in eloquence, were intended for the willing slaves of tyranny."*

How much longer matters would have remained in this undecided state, if no unexpected occurrence had taken place, it is impossible to say. An incident occurred, however, at this time, which sealed the fate of the bishops, and paved the way for the downfall of the church. It was the ill-timed protestation of the bishops.

It has been shewn that the commons had evinced unusual animosity towards the bishops. They felt assured that the lords would not concur with them in their measures against the church, as long as the bishops remained: they were

* Hallam, vol. ii. p. 201.

anxious, therefore, to destroy their influence, though "the Archbishop of Canterbury had never so great influence upon the councils at court as Dr. Burgess or Mr. Marshal had then upon the houses: neither did all the bishops in Scotland together so much meddle in temporal affairs as Mr. Henderson has done."* Failing, therefore, of success in the impeachment of the bishops, the commons used their efforts to lessen their reputation with the people. The speeches of some of the members, and the charges in the remonstrance, all tended to the same end. Encouraged by the proceedings within the walls of parliament, the rabble began to raise the cry of "no bishops." The lord mayor, aldermen, and common council petitioned for their removal: and the London apprentices presented a petition, praying that "the prelacy might be rooted out."† These petitions were encouraged by the commons, in the hope of inducing the lords to concur in their vote for their removal. Great tumults occurred when the petitions were taken down to Westminster. The bishops were attacked by the mob in the most brutal manner with stones and dirt. As their persons were exposed to such violence, Williams, archbishop of York, counselled them to withdraw altogether from the house. He immediately penned a protestation, which was presented to the peers, and in which they state that their lives are in danger by attending on the house. They conclude by protesting against all acts passed during their absence. This protestation irri-

* Clarendon, vol. i p. 239.

† Even the women presented an address against the bishops and the popish lords. A paper was delivered to the minister of Christ Church, desiring the prayers of the congregation, "to assist the apprentices with strength to root out superstition, and to extirpate the innovations of the bishops and clergy."—WALKER's *Sufferings of Clergy*, p. 50; DUGDALE, p. 80. This course was pursued "by such as, doubtless, had made a deep search into the nature of the thing: to wit, some thousands of tradesmen in and about the city of London."—TWELL's *Life of Pococke*, p. 80. "The very porters," says Fuller, "petitioned against episcopacy, as a burden too heavy for their shoulders."

tated the lords, and produced that change in their sentiments which the commons had been unable to effect. The bishops were now impeached by the commons, and committed to the Tower.

This was the first blow against the episcopal order that received the sanction of both houses. The lords concurred in the impeachment. The protestation of the bishops, and the sanction given by the lords to the impeachment, were unfortunate measures, and gave a turn to the state of affairs: from this time the house of peers, weakened by the removal of the bishops, began to dwindle into insignificance. If the bishops were unwise in protesting, the lords were equally so in viewing the matter in so serious a light. Even the friends of the prelates were unable to defend them in this imprudent step: and their enemies perceived that the act would accomplish the very object after which they had been labouring. One member said that the finger of God was manifest in accomplishing that which could not otherwise have been effected: another said that they were not guilty of treason, but that they were mad, and proper inmates for Bedlam. Still the committal of twelve bishops to prison for this protestation, exceeded in severity and injustice any act of the king or the high commission.

Soon after the committal of the bishops, an unfortunate and ill-judged step was taken by the king. Hearing that some members of the commons were engaged in a treasonable correspondence with the Scots, he proceeded on the 4th of January, 1641-2, to the house for the purpose of demanding the five suspected members. This act alarmed the fears of many who were not unfriendly to the king. Many distrusted his majesty, and, in consequence of this unfortunate proceeding, were induced to assent to measures not only injurious to the monarch, but destructive to the church. Many of his friends endeavoured to dissuade him from the attempt, being convinced that the scheme originated

in passion rather than calm reflection. When the king entered the house his friends were overwhelmed with astonishment, his enemies were filled with exultation. This sudden action, says Whitelock, was the visible and apparent ground of all our following misery.

The tumults continued to increase in London, so that his majesty, feeling that his safety was endangered, removed on the 10th of January to Hampton Court. He never returned to his capital till he was conducted thither as a prisoner. Every day the prospect of a reconciliation between the king and the parliament became more distant. Petitions were presented urging the commons to place the country in a posture of defence; and the parliament demanded from his majesty the command of the militia. In March they resolved that the kingdom should be put in a posture of defence, and that the militia should be under the direction of parliament.

As might have been expected, the mob were elated with the success of their scheme against the bishops: instead of being suppressed, they were rather encouraged, by the commons. They now began to clamour for the removal of the bishops from parliament. A bill had been sent from the commons to that effect: on the day after their committal the lords promised to reconsider the subject. After some debate, the bill was carried by a considerable majority. Such a bill would never, but for the protestation, have been countenanced by the peers. Some even of the friends of the bishops concurred in this measure: they were fearful lest by some other rash act they might ruin their cause; they, therefore, sacrificed them to the anger of the people. The passing of the bill was celebrated in London with the usual demonstrations of joy. Not many years after, this very mob celebrated with similar expressions of joy the dissolution of the parliament; and, at the restoration, the return of the king was hailed in the same tumultuous manner.

The bill was forwarded to the king at Windsor, who replied that he would take time to consider. Dissatisfied with the delay, the commons urged him to comply, alleging that the passing of this bill would unite the two houses, and would be received as a pledge of his majesty's gracious intentions to rectify remaining abuses. His advisers, by whom he was surrounded at Windsor, recommended, though on totally different grounds, that the bill should be passed. It was urged, that the passing of this bill was the only way to save the church; that many members would be satisfied, and would consent to no other alteration: but, on the other hand, if the bill was rejected, not only the order of bishops, but the whole fabric of the church, would be endangered.* These arguments were seconded by the queen. Accordingly, on the 14th of February, the bill received the royal assent.

By this act the bishops were deprived of their votes in parliament. So far, however, from proving the preservation of the church, as was supposed by some of the king's friends, it became the precedent for a series of aggressions on the order, which issued not only in the loss of temporal jurisdiction to the bishops, but in the destruction of the church itself. The bill had been introduced at an auspicious moment, when the protestation of the bishops had startled the peers; and the king consented in the hope of preserving their spiritual authority. In London the commons were supported by an enraged mob. The puritans, moreover, began to fall in with the views of the presbyterians, who sought every opportunity to weaken the power of the church; and by representing in strong colours the concessions made to the Scots, led the scrupulous clergy to hope that by increasing their demands they might prevail on his majesty to grant them more than at first was anticipated.

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 333.

CHAPTER XIII.

1642—1643.

PROSPECTS—KING RETIRES TO YORK—ATTEMPT AT HULL—WAR COMMENCES—SCOTS' MEDIATION—BILL FOR ABOLITION OF EPISCOPACY—PRESBYTERIANS—REFLECTIONS—PARLIAMENT APPLY TO SCOTS—COVENANT IN SCOTLAND—TAKEN IN ENGLAND—ITS NATURE—SCOTS COME TO ASSIST THE PARLIAMENT.

EVERY thing seemed now to indicate an open rupture between Charles and his parliament. He had made the most important concessions, which were followed by new and still more unreasonable demands from the commons. They now demanded the management of the militia; and when the king refused to sacrifice the rights of the crown, they issued their orders without him. Finding that his concessions only increased the demands of the commons, he removed still further from London, and fixed his residence at York. To prevent the possibility of being pressed to pass other unconstitutional acts, he was anxious to remove as far as possible from London. Many of the king's friends considered the step a rash one: the moderate members in the house were agitated by various conflicting views; on the one side by their distrust of the king, heightened by his attempt on the five members, and by his removal to York; and on the other by the danger that hung over the constitution in the event of the success of the violent party in the house. The secession of many of the king's friends was another unfortunate measure, as it left the wavering members at the mercy of the presbyterians. Still the apprehension of danger from the restoration of the sovereign to power, overbalanced the fears of the majority in the parliament for the safety of the constitution; and, believing that they should be able to

restrain the excesses of the presbyterians, they complied with their measures till retreat was impossible.

The king attempted to secure Hull; but Hotham, the governor, kept the garrison for the parliament. The summer was occupied in warlike preparations. In May, many members of both houses repaired to his majesty, and the number of peers exceeded the number of those remaining at Westminster. The retiring members acted unwisely in leaving their opponents to carry their own measures: for the members in London soon voted that his majesty, seduced by wicked councils, intended to make war against his parliament. On the 2d of June the houses sent a petition to the king, with nineteen propositions. Those only that relate to religion need be noticed here. They request his majesty to consent to such a reformation in the government and liturgy of the church as both houses shall advise, after consultation with learned divines—to agree to laws against innovation and scandalous ministers. These requests prove that the parliament were still for the reformation and not for the destruction of the hierarchy. At this period, presbytery was not contemplated by the majority. The other propositions affected the royal prerogative so materially, that compliance was impossible.

After various unsuccessful attempts at negociation, the king erected his standard at Nottingham on the 22d August, 1642. As soon as war appeared inevitable, the presbyterians, hitherto a small party, endeavoured to persuade the house that there could be neither safety for themselves nor for the country until the royal power should be restrained. The various successes and reverses of the royal arms belong to the civil history of the period, and will only be noticed as far as they bear on ecclesiastical affairs. The battle of Edgehill was fought soon after, both parties claiming the victory.

The present differences between the king and the parliament presented a favourable opportunity to the Scots for

offering their mediation. They requested the king to consent that the government of the two churches might be one and the same: but his majesty remarked, that England and Scotland were different. Their demands had been conceded by the king, but they now wished to impose their system on the English church—to bring down episcopacy, as Burnet remarks, and set up presbytery. The parliament, however, accepted their offer of mediation, and thanked them for their advice. At the same time, they did not contemplate the destruction of the church, for, in this very summer, they declared that they intended to carry into effect a necessary reformation, and to remove nothing except what is evil and justly offensive. The Scots repeated their offer, but insisted on the abolition of episcopacy and the establishment of presbyterian uniformity. In July, the parliament wrote to the Scottish assembly, desiring their advice in effecting the necessary reformation. As the breach between the king and the parliament was daily growing wider, the latter saw the importance of conciliating the Scots. The assembly replied to the letter of the parliament in August: they expressed their sorrow that the work of reformation had proceeded so slowly; and alluded to their desires formerly expressed for one confession, and one directory, and one form of church government. They ask, “What hope can there be of unity in faith and worship, till there be first one form of ecclesiastical government? Yea, what hope of a firm and desirable peace, till prelacy, the main cause of all their miseries, be plucked up root and branch, as a plant which God hath not planted?”* The lords and commons, in their reply, intimate that they have resumed the consideration of church government, though

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 170. They addressed the king in similar terms. In allusion to the difficulties by which the union of the two churches would be encompassed, they say, “That they are not ignorant that the work is great, and the difficulties and impediments many—that there are both mountains and lions in the way: but the strongest let, till it be taken out of the way, is the mountain of prelacy.”

still in the storm: they allude to the uniformity desired by the Scots as a thing not easily attainable; but they express a hope of agreement with their brethren in all substantial points: they also declare that the bishops are the cause of many calamities, and that "the government by archbishops, bishops, deans, &c., is evil and burdensome, a great impediment to reformation, and that the same shall be taken away."* They next signify their intention of calling an assembly of divines, for the purpose of settling such a government as shall be agreeable to the word of God. Such was the state of things at the commencement of the war: the effrontery of the Scots, in wishing to impose their own system on the English church, was never exceeded.

Hitherto, the majority of both houses, as has been already stated, were avowed friends to the church, or, at all events, conformable to her rites. The presbyterians alone contemplated the destruction of the hierarchy; but they were few in number. "The remnant of the old separatists in London was then very small, but enough to stir up the younger and inexperienced to speak vehemently against the bishops, and the church and ceremonies."† Baxter adds, "Some members did cherish these disorders; when they had disgraced ship-money, and the *et cætera* oath, and bowing to altars, and such things as were against law, they stopped not there, but set themselves to cast out the bishops, and the liturgy, which were settled by law: they did so easily admit of petitions against the episcopacy and liturgy, and connived at all the clamours and papers which were against them."‡ "The design against the church was not yet grown popular in the two houses."|| It is true that they were not all agreed on the subject of church government. The majority were episcopalians, and advocated the retrenchment of many abuses. "Some were Erastians, and

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 172.

† Baxter, part i. p. 26.

‡ Baxter, part i. p. 27.

|| Clarendon, vol. ii. p. 51.

would be content with any form of government the magistrate should appoint: the real presbyterians, who were for an entire change of the hierarchy upon the foot of divine right, were as yet but few, and could carry nothing in the house."* Yet, shortly after this period, a change was effected in the commons. The presbyterians were a firm, determined, and active, though, at the same time, small party, whose ulterior, yet not professed, object was to set up presbytery; and in a short space every measure was carried according to the views of that party.

At the close of the year 1642, the affairs of the parliament were in an unprosperous state. They knew the price at which the aid of the Scots could alone be purchased. A bill was therefore prepared for the abolition of episcopacy. On the 1st of September, it received the sanction of the commons, and, on the 10th, that of the lords.† Though the bishops had been attacked, the order had hitherto been spared. The fears of the majority relative to the king's successes led them to pass the bill, as a peace-offering to the Scots. Yet, nothing was decided respecting presbytery: the presbyterians were anxious to adopt the Scottish platform, but the time was not yet arrived for an open declaration of their views; a premature disclosure of their sentiments would have alarmed the majority, and defeated their own purposes. It was enacted, that the bill should not come into operation till the 5th of November, 1643,—more than a year from the time of its passing. This bait was laid

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 5.

† The bill enacts, that after a certain time there shall be no archbishops, bishops, &c., nor any other office in the cathedrals; that their names, titles, and jurisdiction, shall cease. That their lands, rents, and all their possessions, shall revert to the crown; that all impropriations and tithes belonging to deans and chapters shall be put in the hands of trustees, to be disposed of for the support of such a number of preaching ministers in every cathedral as shall be appointed by parliament, and for the maintenance of preaching ministers in other places.

by the presbyterians to catch the wavering members; and the pill, thus gilded over, was taken by many who were by no means hostile to the church, in the hope that, during the year, a reconciliation would be effected between the king and the parliament. A bill to establish presbytery would not have been countenanced in either house; nor was it the intention of the majority to permit the bill to come into operation. Waller, the poet, was one of the strongest opponents of the measure. In reply to the argument, that the people must not be denied, he remarked, "that in the next place we may have as hard a task to defend our property. If these innovations proceed, I shall expect a flat and level in learning, too, as well as in church preferments. Scripture is alleged against the church. For sacred scripture I will not dispute; but I am confident, that whenever an equal division of lands and goods shall be desired, there will be as many places in scripture found out which seem to favour that, as there are now alleged against the prelacy. He voted, therefore, for a reform, not for the abolition, of episcopacy."*

Notwithstanding these acts of hostility, the majority in both houses expected that a favourable change in their circumstances, arising either from the reduction of the king, or his compliance with their wishes, would enable them to save the hierarchy.

The case of the bishops was now truly distressing. They were subject to every species of annoyance and tumult. Many, from a state of affluence, were speedily reduced to a state of indigence.

Various arts were used to secure the passing of the bill. The violent party threw every obstacle in the way, to prevent an amicable adjustment of the differences between the king and the parliament. The presbyterians represented

* Johnson's Lives.

that the Scots would not declare in their favour, unless they would consent to alter the government of the church. The lords were induced to believe that they must lose all, or submit to the sacrifice. The bill was, therefore, supported by the majority.

These acts were diametrically opposed to the recorded sentiments of the majority of the parliament. The advocates of the parliament seek for the cause of the change in the vacillating policy of the king: it is, however, more reasonable to seek it in the practices of the presbyterians, who, by uniting with the majority in seeking a redress of grievances, by conceding their own views, and by fomenting the divisions between the king and the parliament, gradually wrought upon the majority to believe that the king could not be trusted. The presbyterians were aided by the Scots, whom nothing would satisfy but the extirpation of episcopacy. The encouragement given to the Scots involved the parliament in difficulties, from which they could never extricate themselves. The majority of the episcopalians wished to abridge the power of the bishops, and to limit the royal prerogative: they were extremely fearful lest the king should be successful in the war; and the presbyterians seized every opportunity of magnifying the danger.

The history of these times furnishes a most instructive lesson on the advantages of union in purpose and action. The presbyterians were a small body, but they ever presented a compact and unbroken front. Disunion never appeared in their ranks: nor did they venture to propose any of their favourite schemes, until the majority were so far involved as to be compelled to support the measures of the minority, or to abandon their whole cause. “By the negligence, laziness, and absence of the churchmen, a handful of men, much inferior in number and interest, came to give laws to the major part: and, to shew that three diligent persons are really a greater number than ten unconcerned, they, by

plurality of voices, in the end, converted or reduced the whole body to their opinions.”* History can scarcely furnish another instance of such important changes accomplished by the perseverance of a small party: a few energetic men, such as were the leaders of the presbyterians, possess, during seasons of popular excitement, almost unlimited influence, not only over the minds of the giddy multitude, but also over the wavering and undecided of the more elevated ranks in society. The majority are ready to enrol themselves under the banner of any daring leader who, fearless of consequences, can seize the favourable opportunity of action.

When the parliament assembled, the few presbyterians appeared only as the patrons of the rights of the people. The ill-advised attempt on the five members furnished them with an opportunity, which was used to inflame the people against the king. It cannot be denied that there were errors committed by the royal party, which confirmed the representations of the presbyterians, and led many moderate men to yield points of the utmost consequence. The king's removal into the north facilitated the union of the friends of episcopacy with the presbyterians. Not a few were staggered at the king's conduct: and the presbyterians, taking advantage of their hesitation, persuaded them to unite with them in self-defence. Clarendon allows that the leaders of the commons, Lenthall, Pym, Hollis, and the elder Vane, were all well affected to the established religion. “ Few of the commons wished to destroy the hierarchy: they were for moderate episcopacy. This would have satisfied the popular leaders, but was offensive to the Scots. The necessity of humouring that prejudiced people led the majority in the commons to give more countenance to the bill for abolishing episcopacy.”† In these sentiments the bulk of the people concurred. In various petitions they deprecated the abolition

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 253.

† Hallam's Const. Hist. vol. i. p. 158.

of the hierarchy and the liturgy. In London the presbyterians preponderated; and the London mob, countenanced by the faction in the house, succeeded in awing the majority into subjection.

It was foreseen by the parliament that, in order to prevent the success of his majesty, they must appeal to the Scots. They had already sacrificed episcopacy: but the Scots were not satisfied. They sent commissioners into Scotland, for the purpose of prevailing with the Scots to unite with them against the sovereign: and, when their aid could not be procured except on the condition that the English parliament should take the covenant, the sacrifice, costly as it was, was made. The Scottish assembly nominated certain individuals to accompany the commissioners to England, to assist in preparing the nation for the change. They also issued a declaration, containing their reasons for assisting the English parliament against the papists and prelatical army. One of their reasons was, the advantage likely to result to both countries from uniformity in discipline and worship: "England has already laid the foundation, by casting off prelacy, that great idol, and only wants their help to rear the building and put on the cap-stone."*

The covenant was adopted by the Scots in 1638. To secure their aid, the English parliament consented to receive it. It was presented to the commons on the 28th August, 1643: and the 25th September was the day fixed for its adoption. On that day, the house, together with the members of the assembly, met in St. Margaret's church. In the morning, White prayed an hour, to prepare them for taking it: Nye then ascended the pulpit, to shew its lawfulness from scripture, after which he expatiated at considerable length on the benefits likely to accrue from its adoption: Hender-son, one of the Scottish commissioners to the Westminster

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 205.

assembly, concluded this preliminary service in a declaration of what the Scots had achieved, and of the great mercies they had received. Nye again read the covenant from the pulpit, when all the members held up their hands to signify their assent. The members then subscribed their names: and the service was concluded by Dr. Gouge, who prayed for a blessing on the covenant, and on those who had subscribed it.*

Two hundred and twenty-eight members of the house of commons subscribed their names. Shortly afterwards it was ordered to be taken by all persons above the age of eighteen years. How far this order was actually enforced cannot be ascertained; but it was imposed on the clergy, and on all those who held places of honour or profit: "it was taken," says Mr. Hutchinson, "by the men and women of the garrison of Nottingham castle." On the following Sunday it was read in all the London churches. On the 15th of October it was subscribed by the house of lords. It was ordered that a copy of the covenant should be sent to all commanders, who were to tender it to the soldiers—that copies be delivered to the ministers and churchwardens of every parish—that the ministers should read it in their churches, and tender it to their parishioners. In the following year it was ordered by the commons, that the covenant should be read on every day of fasting and humiliation: and that every parish should cause a copy to be hung up in some conspicuous part of the church.

One clause, and that the most direct in its bearing on the subject of this history, need only be quoted. It is as follows: "That we shall, in like manner, without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy (*i. e.* church government by archbishops, bishops, deans and chapters, &c., and all other ecclesiastical officers depending

* Whitelock's Memorials, p. 70.

on that hierarchy), superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness, lest we partake in other men's sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues: and that the Lord may be one, and his name one, in the three kingdoms." Hence it bound those who received it to use their exertions to extirpate episcopacy. Some members of the assembly of divines stumbled at the word "prelacy," being favourers of moderate episcopacy. To overcome their scruples, the celebrated parenthesis was inserted, descriptive of what kind of episcopacy was intended: and Coleman, preaching before the lords, stated, "that, by prelacy, we mean not all episcopacy, but only the form which is here described."*

Some trickery was evidently practised by the presbyterians in their interpretation of this clause. They intended to extirpate every kind of episcopacy: but, to meet the scruples of the more moderate men, they were willing that the word "prelacy" should be interpreted to mean a particular kind of episcopacy. The Scots and the English presbyterians intended to erect their platform on the ruins of episcopacy. While, however, the moderate men were deceived by the presbyterians, the latter were also outwitted by some leading men in the parliament, whose principles, though not yet avowed, were independent. A civil league would have satisfied the English commissioners in Scotland: but the Scots would not listen to such a proposition. Vane, however, succeeded in inserting the word league into the title, as a loop-hole in future for escaping from its impositions. He also prevailed upon the Scots to admit into the first article the expression, "according to the word of God," viewing it as a sufficient security against the encroachments of presbytery. On the other hand, the Scots relied on the

* Baxter, vol. i. p. 49.

next clause, "and according to the practice of the best reformed churches," not doubting that this expression secured the full establishment of the presbyterian model.*

Notwithstanding the zeal of the parliament in imposing the covenant, it appears that it was not universally received. Baxter kept the parish of Kidderminster and the greater part of Worcestershire from taking it, by keeping the ministers from offering it to their congregations.† Its imposition on the clergy will be noticed in another chapter, where the proceedings of the sequestrating committees are narrated.

The adoption of the covenant in England is one of the most remarkable events in English history. The parliament perceived that they must sacrifice the church to gain the Scots, or risk the loss of all by the restoration of the king. A torrent was bearing down upon all the established institutions of the country: while the moderate men, instead of setting themselves resolutely to stem its violence, wrought upon by their fears, yielded to the persuasions of the presbyterians, and sealed the ruin of the hierarchy.

When the English parliament had adopted the covenant, the Scots were no longer tardy in coming to their assistance. They entered England in January 1643-4. In the same month, the king assembled at Oxford those members of the two houses who had deserted from their brethren at Westminster. No less than one hundred and forty of the commons, with fifty or sixty peers, responded to his majesty's call, and repaired to Oxford. The peers at Westminster were only twenty-one in number: the commons consisted of two hundred and eighty, and one hundred were absent in the service of the parliament. They passed an ordinance against the return of the members at Oxford, unless they should first give satisfaction for their fidelity in future.

From the period of the covenant, therefore, the entire

* Burnet's *Memoirs of Hamilton*, p. 240. † Baxter, vol. i. p. 64.

parliament must be viewed as presbyterians, at least until the independents sprang up and asserted their views in opposition to presbytery and the covenant. The coming in of the Scots turned the scale, which for some time had been equally balanced in favour of the parliament. As the Scots were the original cause of the dispute between the king and the commons, so were they a second time instrumental in turning the current against their sovereign.

The lands belonging to the bishops were sequestered for the use of the parliament: and, in addition to these possessions of the church, the estates of notorious delinquents, under which designation were included all his majesty's friends, were, by an ordinance of 1643, sequestered for the public benefit.* Thus were the estates of the loyal inhabitants seized, to enable the parliament to prosecute the war against the king.

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 102.

CHAPTER XIV.

1643.

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY—ITS ORIGIN—ITS MEMBERS—THEIR CHARACTER AND OPINIONS—MILTON'S ACCOUNT OF THEM—SEQUESTRATIONS OF CLERGY FROM 1640 TO 1643—MEANS USED TO DEFAME THE CLERGY—PETITIONS AGAINST THE CLERGY—ABUSIVE TERMS—CHARGES AGAINST THE CLERGY—COMMITTEE FOR SCANDALOUS MINISTERS—INFORMERS—BAXTER'S STATEMENT—BRANCH COMMITTEES FOR THE COUNTIES—COMMITTEE FOR PLUNDERED MINISTERS—CHARACTER OF THE SEQUESTERED CLERGY—JEREMY TAYLOR AN EARLY SUFFERER—WHITE AND HIS "FIRST CENTURY OF SCANDALOUS MINISTERS"—NUMBERS SEQUESTERED—DISCIPLINE SET ASIDE—ORIGIN OF THE SECTS.

HAVING detailed the proceedings of both parties till the period of the covenant, we shall now state the origin of the Westminster assembly of divines. The object of the Scots was to effect a union in worship and discipline between the two churches, by the establishment of presbytery in both countries. Nothing short of an assimilation in church government would satisfy the Scots.

As early as 1641, a committee of religion, composed of bishops and barons, had been appointed by the lords to consider the abuses alleged against the church. This committee was dispersed by the bill against deans and chapters. In the celebrated remonstrance, it was requested that his majesty would call an assembly of learned and pious divines, to complete the reformation of the church. In the year 1642, the two houses intimated that they intended "speedily to have consultation with godly and learned divines." The same year, a bill authorising an assembly was passed, but neglected by the king. The matter was again resumed in 1643. On the 14th of June an ordinance was published, in which it was stated that, "whereas no blessing is more dear than the

purity of religion, and many things remain in the liturgy and discipline of the church requiring a further reformation : and the present parliament has resolved that the present government by archbishops, &c. is evil and burdensome, an impediment to reformation, and to be taken away : that such a church government be settled as is most agreeable to God's word, and apt to preserve the peace of the church at home, and a nearer agreement with that of Scotland and other reformed churches abroad : for the better effecting hereof, and vindicating the church of England from all calumnies and aspersions, it is thought necessary to call an assembly of learned and judicious divines to advise hereupon, as shall be proposed by either or both houses of parliament.* It is next stated, that they " shall meet upon summons, signed by the clerks of both houses of parliament, in Henry VII.'s chapel, on July 1st, 1643, and, after the first meeting, shall, from time to time, sit, and be removed from place to place, in such manner as both houses shall direct. And the said persons are authorised to confer of such matters concerning the liturgy and discipline of the church, or the vindicating its doctrines from false constructions, as shall be proposed by both or either house of parliament, and no other."† Dr. Twisse was nominated as prolocutor. The ordinance closes with a repetition of the restriction relative to the subjects of discussion : " But the said persons shall not exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or any other power than here expressed." The bill for calling an assembly had, earlier in the summer, been refused by the king : under these circumstances, the parliament voted that their ordinance, during his majesty's absence, should be binding on the people ; and that the afore-mentioned act should be turned into a parliamentary ordinance.‡

Such was the origin of this famous assembly. The divines

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 125.

† Ibid.

‡ May, p. 188.

were nominated by the knights and burgesses, two from each county ; and others were added from time to time by the parliament. Thirty laymen were associated with the clergy — some of the bishops and most eminent episcopalians were named in the ordinance, but they refused to recognise the authority by which the assembly was convened. Some few were independents, who had recently returned from the continent — they were designated the dissenting brethren. The Scottish commissioners were also admitted to their meetings, as representatives from the general assembly of Scotland.

The accounts given of the assembly by contemporary writers are opposite and contradictory : while some speak of them as illiterate and ignorant, others describe them as the most learned men of the age : both are, perhaps, equally remote from the truth. Clarendon states that, with the exception of twenty, they were avowed enemies of the church of England. This assertion is not correct if referred to the period of their assembling ; but it is quite true when applied to their subsequent proceedings. The noble historian, moreover, states “ some were infamous in their lives, and most of them of mean parts in learning, if not of scandalous ignorance.” That some were immoral in their lives is probable, and it is certain that others were men of inferior abilities ; but that the assertion relative to the ignorance of the majority is incorrect, is evident from their proceedings.

Milton's account could scarcely be passed over in a history of the assembly. He states that a certain number of divines were called to reform the church ; “ neither chosen by any rule or custom ecclesiastical, nor eminent for either piety or knowledge above others left out. The most part were such as had preached and cried down, with great show of zeal, the avarice and pluralities of the prelates ; that one cure of souls was full employment for one spiritual person, how able soever, if not a charge rather above human strength. Yet these conscientious men wanted not boldness,

to the ignominy and scandal of their pastor-like profession, and especially of their boasted reformation, to seize into their hands, or, not unwillingly, to accept (besides one, sometimes two or more, of the best livings), collegiate master-ships in the university, rich lectures in the city, setting sail to all winds that might blow gain into their covetous bosoms." Their proceedings will be detailed at length in a future page : it may be sufficient to remark now, that all the members took the covenant in St. Margaret's church with the house of commons.

From the period when the covenant was adopted, the clergy were compelled to submit to that test, or lose their preferments. A large proportion of the episcopal clergy had been sequestered before the covenant was introduced ; we shall now, therefore, give a sketch of the parliamentary proceedings in reference to the subject, from the commencement of the session until September 1643, when the covenant was imposed.

The sequestrations of the clergy commenced almost with the beginning of the parliament. In the outset the commons ejected, by their own authority, all those who were obnoxious ; but, as business increased, this authority was delegated to committees. Every means was resorted to to blacken and defame the character of the ministers of the established church. Many of the episcopal clergy were men of vast erudition, as well as of unblemished reputation ; yet every method was adopted to bring them and their office into contempt ; names of the most odious kind were applied in order to render them obnoxious to the populace ; while every species of slander was industriously circulated, their persons were exposed to the rude attacks of a disorderly rabble. These things, however, were only the prelude to the dismal tragedy that followed.

In the petitions presented to the commons against the clergy, the most reproachful terms were introduced. All

the imaginary evils, under which the populace described themselves as labouring, were laid at the door of the bishops and clergy. These petitions were not only received by the commons, but received without any expression of indignation. The adherence of the clergy to that church, to whose rites, ceremonies, and doctrines, they had yielded their unfeigned assent, was converted into a crime. A common charge was that of Arminianism, which, had it been true, did not amount to a crime: many, however, of the sufferers, as Hall, Prideaux, Sanderson, Usher, Morley, and others, were, in matters of faith, avowed Calvinists. But the principal charge was malignancy, which signified attachment to the king, and opposition to the parliament.

These inflammatory petitions were supported in the house by speeches of a similar tendency. If a clergyman from any cause became obnoxious to any of his parishioners, a charge was preferred, and sequestration followed. Public notice was given throughout the country that a tribunal was erected, where all charges against the clergy would be considered. Servants were not unfrequently induced by bribes to become spies upon their masters; while any envious parishioner had an opportunity of taking the most ample revenge for any supposed affront. Such an opportunity was not neglected by those who entertained a dislike to their ministers. It was soon found that the little finger of the parliament was heavier than the loins of the sovereign. When a clergyman was charged with malignancy, or any other constructive crime, he was compelled to incur an immense expense by a journey to London, to meet the accusations. The parliamentary journals exhibit a long list of names of clergymen who were summoned to London on vexatious charges, many of whom were imprisoned, and then sequestered. Some of the clergy were confined in the houses of the bishops, while others were placed on board the vessels in the river, to the imminent danger of their lives.

As early as November 6, 1640, the whole house was formed into a grand committee of religion, of which White was chosen chairman. Soon after, on the 19th November, when the petitions against the clergy became too numerous for the attention of the whole house, a sub-committee was formed. Not only were the parishioners instigated to exhibit charges against their ministers, but the knights and burgesses were required to bring informations respecting the state of religion in their respective counties.* When such facilities were granted for exhibiting charges against the clergy, it cannot surprise us to find that this sub-committee, with their indefatigable chairman, White, found themselves fully occupied. It was designated the "committee for scandalous ministers." The very name proves the animosity and deeply rooted hatred of the commons to the loyal clergy. The very designation was intended to cast a shade over the characters of the episcopal ministers. If an innocent clergyman, from the malice of his servants, or of some of his parishioners, was summoned before the committee, his character ever after, even though acquitted of the charge alleged against him, was injured, and his usefulness among his people destroyed! The multitude are ever ready to revile their superiors. Those clergymen, therefore, who escaped from the fangs of the committee, became, on returning to their parishes, subject to every species of insult from their sectarian parishioners. The finger of scorn was pointed at them as they passed along the streets; and even the boys exclaimed, "There goes a scandalous minister!" The designation of the committee was intended to imply that the body of the clergy were immoral.

It appears that Finch, vicar of Christ Church, in London, was the first clergyman ejected by the parliament. "It was his misfortune to live in an age when the beauty of holiness

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 26.

was deemed deformity ; and when orthodoxy, conformity, and politeness, were enrolled in the black list of crimes.”* Bowing at the name of Jesus, the use of the surplice, and opposition to the parliament, were the usual charges against those who appeared before the committee. Not a few were sequestered for refusing to sanction the defacing the monuments in their churches, incurring, by their opposition to the parliamentary ordinance, the charge of superstition and popery. Others were charged merely with inserting the letters I H S in some conspicuous part of the church. One clergyman was summoned before the committee for saying that “he had rather hear a pair of organs than Hopkins’s psalms, calling them Hopkins’s jigs.” Another was charged merely with walking in his garden on the Sunday : and though against the greater number the usual charge was malignancy, yet all were sequestered under the general designation, “scandalous ministers.” Dr. Clayfield was summoned upon his knees before the commons for saying, “From all lay-puritans, good Lord deliver me.” Sir John Lamb was compelled to appear for setting up an organ : many were summoned to London, imprisoned, and then liberated by exorbitant bail : informations were even received against clergymen for sermons preached two years before the present parliament was assembled ; and some were taken into custody for refusing to read the parliamentary declarations.† In a short space more than two thousand petitions were presented. Business accumulating in consequence of the numerous petitions, the sub-committee was again divided into several smaller ones, designated after the names of their respective chairmen, as White’s, Corbet’s, Harlowe’s,

* Granger, vol. v. p. 199 ; Walker’s *Sufferings of the Clergy*, part ii. p. 170.

† Some were charged with crimes, committed, as was alleged, before their entrance in the ministerial office. Others with praying to departed saints, whereas they had only used the words of thanksgiving in the prayer for the church militant, for those already departed in the faith.

and Deering's. When a petition was presented against a minister, even though a very few names were attached, it was received as the petition of the parish. The accusers of the clergy were almost always profligate characters, or enthusiastic sectarians.* When the petitions were considered, if the accused party was deemed guilty, the order of sequestration was issued, and its execution entrusted to certain individuals named in the order. At this time the parliament had not resorted to that systematic mode of procedure, which was adopted at a later period.

Speaking of these earlier ejections, Baxter remarks that the parliamentary commissioners expelled the scandalous and opposers, but left nearly one half who could do neither good nor harm. If by the half remaining he means that half of the whole body of the clergy, the ejections must have been numerous indeed. It is clear from the admissions even of Baxter and others, that the larger portion of the early sequestered clergy were not immoral, but opposers of the parliament. The commons were aware of the influence usually possessed by a clergyman over his parishioners; and as their army, after the commencement of the war, was recruited from the country, it became an important point to secure a well-affected clergy in every place to which their authority was extended. Hence, they endeavoured to confer the benefices of the church on persons in whom they could confide; and, as fast as the towns and villages fell under their authority, the loyal clergy were sequestered.

To manifest their contempt of the services of the church, some of the people would put on their hats during the celebration of divine worship. In some churches the disaffected parishioners placed themselves at the further end of the church during the communion, in order that they might be

* Any common informer was encouraged to bring charges; and some notorious characters were accustomed to extort money from the clergy under the pretence of joining the parishioners in an information.

prepared with a charge against the minister, if he declined to carry the elements to the places where they were sitting.

Besides the various committees into which the original sub-committee was divided, and which have already been specified, there were others, at a subsequent period, appointed for the more distant parts of the country, denominated committees of parliament, and country committees. They were composed of the deputy-lieutenants, and such individuals as were named by the parliament. They were also denominated committees for such and such a place. The first of these branch committees commenced its sittings at Northampton in 1643. They were authorised to examine witnesses, and to transmit the documents to London. Until the establishment of these country committees London and the parts adjacent had suffered more severely than the distant parts of the country. It was now impossible for any one to escape — many had hitherto avoided sequestration, in consequence of their distance from London. It was not easy for the parishioners who disliked their minister to travel from a remote part of the country to London, at a period when travelling was attended with considerable danger; but an opportunity was now offered to any disaffected person to exhibit a charge against an innocent clergyman, by erecting a tribunal at his very door.

In addition to these committees for scandalous ministers, another had been appointed in December 1642, called the "Committee for plundered Ministers." It was authorised to make provision for "such godly preachers as had either suffered loss of goods by his majesty's soldiers, or loss of livings for adhering to the houses of parliament." This committee was in derision termed the "Committee for plundering Ministers." They had authority to place their sufferers in the livings of the ejected loyalists. In many cases, however, the new ministers were not appointed for life, but only during pleasure. In 1643, this committee was

empowered to receive information against scandalous clergymen; and from this period it appears that the committee for plundered ministers, and that for scandalous ministers, acted together.

It is often asserted that the ejected clergy were either immoral or insufficient; whereas it is evident that they were equal, if not superior, to those appointed by the parliament. A long list of names from the early sequestrations might easily be produced, to disprove the assertion that they were generally scandalous in their lives, or of inferior talents;* one case, that of the celebrated Jeremy Taylor, may be adduced as an example. The sequestration of this learned, and excellent, and amiable man, was one of the first fruits of the labours of the committee for scandalous ministers; for Taylor was ejected in 1642. No other evidence is required to shew that the most pious and talented men were ejected, while the avowed object of the committee was the sequestration of the immoral alone. Taylor could not have been cast out for scandalous conduct, for it was most exemplary; nor yet for insufficiency, since his eminent learning was unquestionable. Nor could he be charged with violent opposition to the parliament, for violence was opposite to his nature; and he was mild, gentle, and peaceable, beyond most of his contemporaries. No! his piety, learning, and virtues, endeared him to his parishioners, and enabled him to exercise an unbounded influence over them. His character rendered him an object of dislike to the parliament, who could not permit him to escape, though his piety and talents were indisputable.

Notwithstanding the many names that might be adduced, the advocates of the parliament assert, that few, if any, were ejected before the imposition of the covenant, except for immoral practices. Can it be denied that Taylor was ejected

* Milton states that he assisted the puritans, "who were inferior in learning to the bishops."

in 1642? or that many of his fellow-sufferers were his equals in piety? The truth is, none escaped whose sentiments were known to be favourable to the king. Neal states that none were sequestered, except for false doctrine or opposition to the parliament, till after the imposition of the covenant.* No less, however, than one hundred and ten of the London clergy were sequestered before the covenant was introduced.† It cannot be supposed that half of this number were scandalous or active promoters of the war. Nay, Neal in the very same pages nullifies his own previous assertion; for he laments "that several pious and good bishops and other clergymen suffered afterwards in common with their brethren, either because they could not take the covenant or comply with the new directory."‡ Now, it is notorious that the bishops had been sufferers long before the covenant. Neal admits, however, that the commissioners were sometimes too forward in exposing the failings of the clergy, and that the country committees ejected chiefly for malignity.§ Neal attempts a justification of the parliament, by insinuating that the committees might in some instances have exceeded their instructions as given in the ordinance.|| It is true that they did exceed the letter of their instructions; but the parliament never restrained them. As no attention was ever paid to the complaints of the sufferers, the parliament must be considered as implicated in the practices of their servants.

The ejected clergy were, in most cases, reduced to the greatest indigence: they were cast upon the world without the means of subsistence. The proceedings of the high commission were never so tyrannical as those of the parliament.

In the year 1643, the notorious White published his "First Century of Scandalous Ministers," from which title

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 25.

† Walker, vol. ii. p. 180.

‡ Neal, vol. iii. p. 25.

§ Ibid. p. 34.

|| Ibid. p. 35.

he has ever since been designated Century White. In many of the pamphlets of the day the clergy are loaded with abuse: it was not sufficient to rob them of their livings, but their names must be branded with infamy. The title of White's pamphlet was intended to imply, that all the ejected clergy were scandalous: with some few exceptions, however, the crimes of which they stand charged are, bowing at the name of Jesus, not observing the parliamentary fasts, and, principally, malignancy. White never published the Second Century, though he threatened it; but he wrote another work, entitled the "Looking Glass," in which he states, that all who opposed the parliament are guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost.* He died in 1644. In one of his speeches he stated that there were eight thousand scandalous clergy, who deserved sequestration; and in this pamphlet he boasts of having assisted in ejecting eight thousand. The number was, doubtless, greatly exaggerated by White, who, like many open profligates, boasted of more enormities than he had actually perpetrated; yet this boast proves the amount of sequestrations, before the covenant even, to have been very numerous. In 1647, a petition was presented to Fairfax, in the name of many thousand sequestered ministers, who allege that they were ejected by the two committees for scandalous and plundered ministers; but how many of them were sequestered before the time of the covenant, cannot be ascertained. Not only were scurrilous pamphlets printed against the clergy, but their names were reviled from the pulpit by the presbyterian ministers.

Neal admits, that the silencing of so many rendered it difficult to supply the vacant livings with suitable persons.† Many parishes were destitute of a minister; to remedy which deficiency, not a few men of slender abilities, and without education, were admitted into the sacred office.

* Wood's Ath. vol. i. p. 71.

† Neal, vol. iii. p. 40.

These individuals were not regularly inducted, but were mere tenants at will. Neal, with his usual ingenuity, turns this circumstance to the account of the parliament, intimating that they reserved the power of displacing them, in order that in the event of a reconciliation with the king, those who had been ejected for opposition to the parliament, might be restored.*

At the time of the covenant, no ordinance had been passed to set aside the liturgy of the church; nor was such an act effected till a later period. But from this time discipline was virtually dissolved. "There were no more ecclesiastical courts; no visitations; no wearing the habits; no regard paid to the canons or ceremonies, nor even to the common prayer itself."† Before, therefore, the liturgy was set aside by authority, it ceased to be used; and those ministers who adopted it became obnoxious to the parliament, and generally lost their livings. The people were gradually prepared for the destruction of the ancient order. At first neither the people nor the parliament were prepared to reject that formulary, which had been used by their ancestors, and had become endeared to them by long usage. The commons disclaimed the idea of extirpating the liturgy; yet, after this declaration, they frequently inducted ministers to the churches, who, not only refused to read it, but publicly reviled it from the pulpit. Even when the assembly was convened, it was stated that "parliament did not intend wholly to abrogate the common prayer." When, however, the aid of the Scots was purchased by the covenant, the common prayer was no longer held in reverence.

The origin of the numerous sects can be traced to this period. Episcopal government was abolished; the covenant was taken; the liturgy was disused; but no other system was erected: hence every one was at liberty to follow his

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 41.

† Ibid. p. 97.

own inclination. From this time till the end of the war the sectaries increased, and, in the absence of ecclesiastical discipline, obtained possession of many of the sequestered churches.

CHAPTER XV.

1644.

LAUD—CHARGES AGAINST HIM—CHARGES EXAMINED—INFLUENCE OF THE SCOTS—THEIR HATRED OF LAUD—HIS DIARY AND PAPERS SEIZED—ORDINANCE OF ATTAINDER—DEATH AND CHARACTER—HIS VIEWS ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT—HALL WRITES HIS WORK ON EPISCOPACY—NEW DISCIPLINE—LITURGY ABOLISHED—DIRECTORY.

WHEN the English parliament was fairly committed to the covenant, it became necessary to give other proofs of their zeal against episcopacy. Laud's name was detested by the Scots, in consequence of the canons and liturgy; and they sought every opportunity of inflaming the English public against the fallen prelate. From the year 1640 he had continued in the Tower, almost forgotten amid the tumults and confusions of the period. In 1643, however, in obedience to the Scots, he was called upon to answer to the charge of treason. As his death forms so conspicuous an event in the history of these times, and shews in such strong colours the enmity of his opponents, the circumstances connected therewith may be detailed here for the purpose of illustrating the ecclesiastical proceedings of the period now under review.

It must be admitted that Laud was justly chargeable with many acts of imprudence; but they cannot be construed into treason: nor could they deserve so severe a penalty as the forfeiture of life. The charges adduced were

numerous, but eventually were comprehended under three distinct heads. He was charged with "treacherously endeavouring to subvert the rights of parliament, and the fundamental laws of the kingdom." This charge was attempted to be proved by the production of his own diary, in which were these words, "a resolution was voted at the board to assist the king in extraordinary ways, if the parliament should refuse." There is nothing treasonable in this passage; nor, if there had been, ought his own papers to have been produced to prove his guilt and endanger his life. The other charges relate entirely to matters of religion: as setting up images in his chapel; practising superstitious observances in the consecration of churches; placing the communion-table altar-wise; bowing at the name of Jesus; encouraging Arminianism; suppressing Fox's "Book of Martyrs," to gratify the catholics;* and a design to bring in popery. All these charges were declared to constitute one general crime of high treason.

That he attempted to give an undue influence to the crown; that many of his proceedings were marked by severity,—are points clearly established. But his intentions were not such as his enemies would represent. His opinions were formed, and his actions were influenced, by the maxims of the age. The sound of liberty had but recently been heard in this country; nor was it understood, as was proved by events. During the time of Laud's influence, as much practical liberty was enjoyed by the subject as at any previous period. Neither Charles nor Laud attempted to establish a new principle in endeavouring to defend the prerogative against the encroachments of the people. The same practices had been pursued by Henry, Elizabeth, and James. Charles merely walked in the steps of his predecessors: Laud only

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 442. With regard to Fox, Laud stated that the work alluded to was only an abridgement, and that he had suppressed it lest the original should fall into disuse.

advised the king to pursue a system that was completely in accordance with the principles of the times. Laud was not destitute of principle: the purity of his motives, however mistaken may have been his views, will not be questioned by impartial posterity. Nor ought it to be forgotten, in forming an estimate of his conduct, that his example was soon copied by the men whose outcries against his administration were the loudest.

The parliament would have been justified in preventing him from exercising any further influence over the sovereign. This object, indeed, was now fully accomplished by the abolition of episcopacy. It cannot be alleged in justification, that it was necessary to remove a dangerous enemy, for Laud's power was destroyed, and his person under their own control: and, as so long a space elapsed from his commitment until his trial, the measure appeared the more cruel and vindictive. Had the impeachment been followed by his speedy execution, the plea of necessity might, with some colour, have been set up. More than three years had elapsed, a period sufficient to allow their anger to cool. To bring him, covered with hoary hairs, and labouring under the weight of years, to an ignominious death on the scaffold, evinced a desire, not of justice, but revenge.

His fate was undoubtedly hastened in order to gratify the Scots, as well as for the purpose of inspiring the royalists with terror. The parliament could not plead the necessity of appeasing the popular fury, for the people had forgotten him: nor would their attention have been recalled but by the proceedings at his trial. It probably was not the original intention of the parliament to act with so much severity: but, when the league with Scotland was entered into, they were tempted to give the Scots a proof of their sincerity in the reformation of the church, by removing her greatest champion.

The primate defended himself with great vigour. For

two years and a half the committee of the house of commons had been searching for evidence: during the same space he was closely imprisoned: yet no evidence sufficient to establish the charge of treason could be procured. It was rumoured that he had kept a diary of the transactions in which he had been engaged. The committee, therefore, issued a warrant to search his papers. In pursuance of this order, Prynne and others, with a party of soldiers, entered the archbishop's chamber before he had risen from his bed. On entering the room, Prynne rushed to the side of the bed, and took from the archbishop's pocket the diary, which was the principal object of their search. He seized, moreover, twenty-one bundles of papers, which he had prepared for his defence, and also his book of private devotion. It was as unfeeling as it was unjust to seize his papers and use them at his trial: yet the diary was produced in court several times while the archbishop was present. The registers of the high commission were ransacked by his enemies; while he was not permitted to consult them. The enmity of the commons was evinced by the selection of his implacable enemy Prynne as his principal accuser, and by entrusting to him the warrant for the seizure of his books. The age, station, and misfortunes of the prisoner certainly pleaded for gentler treatment.

The trial commenced on the 20th of March, 1644, and was continued during twenty days, not in succession, but at considerable intervals. The 29th of July was the last day of hearing: on the 2d of September he recapitulated the charges with much ability. During the trial, he was exposed to the insults of the mob, while going to and returning from the house of peers. Sergeant Wilde stated in his speech, "that he marvelled the people did not tear him in pieces as he passed between his barge and the house." This was, at least, a gentle hint to the mob to prevent the necessity of a public execution. Some of the clergy branded him from the

pulpit as their chief enemy. The charges were so trivial, that posterity will wonder how his enemies "could improve feathers into monsters. Such is the act of managers in an ill cause, to raise apparitions that terrify more than living bodies."*

His replies to the charges were full and satisfactory. In answer to the charge of repairing the windows of the chapel at Lambeth defaced at the reformation, he stated that he knew not that the subjects were to be found in the missal, but that he had restored them from his recollection of the histories to which the pieces referred, and from the fragments that remained. During the height of his power, the university of Oxford addressed him in terms of the most fulsome adulation: in their letters he is styled "his holiness," and "most holy father." These expressions were embodied in the charges. That Laud should have suffered such language to be used without reproof, is not so surprising as that the university should have adopted it. Every charge was magnified by the managers of the trial. With regard to the Scottish liturgy, he solemnly declared that he received the first intimation of what was intended from the king, and that he was not consulted till the scheme was ripe for execution. The Bishop of Ross was more implicated in this measure than Laud, though his strong views on the subject of episcopacy gave a colour to the charge. The voice of justice calls loudly on posterity to vindicate Laud's character from unfounded aspersions: "yet," says Lord Hailes, "what historian dares defend him?" At the time of his trial, innocence was of no avail, since the current of popular opinion was irresistible. The charge of popery had no foundation: "he was too proud to submit to the church of Rome—he never could bring his neck under the Roman yoke, though he might stick for the grandeur of the clergy."† "The archbishop was much

* Comp. Hist. vol. iii. p. 86.

† Wilson's Annals of James I.

against the court of Rome, though not against that church in so high a kind.”* He declared that he never contemplated the introduction of popery: nor were his enemies able to fasten the charge upon him. It is, indeed, certain that the catholics once entertained hopes of his conversion: but their expectations were soon dissipated by his learned work against Fisher, the Jesuit. A writer, who cannot be charged with partiality to the archbishop’s memory, asserts, that, “if for nothing else, yet for his learned work against Fisher, he deserved far another fate than he met with, and ought not now to be mentioned without due honour.”†

To load his memory with obloquy, his diary, in a garbled state, was published by Prynne, with various notes and comments, distinguished by their virulence against the archbishop. In the recapitulation of his defence, he says, “I saw every lord present with a new thin book, in folio.” A perusal of this work, even as given by Prynne, will furnish abundant evidence of the kindness of his disposition, and the integrity of his views.

Treason, after all their efforts, could not be proved: the commons, therefore, proceeded by attainder. The ordinance stuck in the lords, who concurred with the commons as to the facts; but desired satisfaction in point of law. On the 4th of January, however, 1644–5, when six peers only were present, the ordinance passed the upper house: and, on the 20th of the same month, he was sacrificed to the clamours of his enemies. While the lords were hesitating, the citizens of London presented a petition praying for speedy justice, “which was, no doubt,” says Neal, “an artful contrivance of his enemies.”‡ This execution proves that a parliament can act with more tyranny than a king: “The most unjustifiable act of these zealots was the death of Laud.”§

In forming an estimate of his character, it must be recol-

* May, p. 16.

† Rehearsal Transposed, p. 281.

‡ Neal, vol. iii. p. 243.

§ Hallam, vol. ii. p. 236.

lected that it has been his fate to be viewed as a martyr by his friends, and a tyrant by his foes. That he was injudicious in imposing ceremonies not sanctioned by the practice of the English church, is admitted : that he was aspiring and ambitious, is equally certain : but that he intended to sacrifice the liberties of his country, is the gratuitous assumption of his enemies. He was sincere, though unwise, in his proceedings. "He had," says Clarendon, "great parts and virtues, allayed by infirmities : a sharp way of expressing himself : as his enemies accused him of popery, though not inclined to it, so he had as much prejudice to serve as if they were enemies to the discipline of the church, because they concurred with Calvin in points of doctrine." He was less concerned in the high commission than the lay members. His views of religious liberty were as just as those of the puritans : the principles of both were the same : and, while the practices of the puritans are attributed to the principles of the age, the same allowance must, in justice, be made for the archbishop. The very men whom Laud persecuted for not using the common prayer, acted on the same principle when they grasped the sword of the civil magistrate.

The enemies of the primate are unwilling to admit of any redeeming qualities in his character — even his learning has been questioned : yet was he outstripped by any of his contemporaries in solid and useful learning ? Let his benefactions to the university be viewed as proofs of his love of learning, and of his sincere desire to promote it in others — let his charities in London, at Reading, at Nottingham, reflect honour on his memory as a humane and liberal benefactor of the poor. That he was a great man will scarcely be disputed by the unprejudiced. "With all his faults of temper," says Bishop Heber, "and judgment (exaggerated as those faults have been by the bitterness of the party whom he first persecuted, and who afterwards hunted him to death), he must ever deserve the thanks of posterity

as a liberal and judicious patron of that learning and piety which he himself possessed in no ordinary degree.”* “He exhibited,” says Mosheim, “a mixed character of great qualities and great defects. The voice of justice must celebrate his erudition, fortitude, and ingenuity, zeal for science, and munificence to men of letters.” “He was learned, sincere, and zealous,” observes Bishop Burnet, “regular in his own life, and humble in his private deportment; but hot and indiscreet, eagerly pursuing some things inconsiderable or mischievous.” Fuller states that his articles of visitation were as moderate as those of any other bishop. His errors were evidently those of the head, not of the heart; his judgment was erroneous, but his intentions were honest.

His private character was never assailed. Some things are alleged as proofs of a contracted mind: some late writers charge him with superstition, and with being an observer of dreams, because in his Diary he alludes to auspicious days, and mentions bleeding at the nose. It should, however, be remembered that the wisest men of that age were not emancipated from the influence of such feelings; and even in the present day they remain in full vigour among the uneducated classes of society. Baxter and all the clergy of that day were firm believers in witchcraft; and the enlightened Hale consigned several miserable objects who were charged with witchcraft to death. Many works were written on the subject; and unbelief on this point was considered as equal to a rejection of the Bible. It is not singular, therefore, that Laud should have been influenced by the general views of the age.

It is questionable whether those feelings of superstition, so common in the days of our ancestors, were more injurious in their tendency than the latitudinarianism of the present enlightened age. Many who are freed from the

* Life of Jeremy Taylor.

influence of such feelings, are emancipated also from the shackles of the Bible and Christianity. The fate of Laud is pregnant with instruction : it may serve to shew that the fall of the mitre is inseparable from the fall of the crown.

Laud's notions on the subject of church government were at variance with those adopted by many of his predecessors, who, until the time of Bancroft, never claimed a divine right for the government of the English church ; and even Bancroft admitted the validity of presbyterian ordination ; for when it was suggested in 1610 that the Scotch bishops elect should be ordained presbyters, he opposed on the ground that ordination by presbyters was valid. As the presbyterians advanced the claim of divine right with so much arrogance, the episcopalians assumed a new position and defended their own platform on the same ground. The divine right of presbytery was pleaded by the Scots with a dogmatism almost ridiculous. "To balance their declarations Laud recommended Bishop Hall to write on the divine right of episcopacy."* The work was undertaken by Hall, and, when completed, was sent to Laud, who corrected the manuscript with a pencil.† In returning the manuscript to the bishop, he remarks in a letter with which it was accompanied, "You say that episcopacy is an ancient, holy, and divine institution : it must be ancient and holy if divine. Would it not be more full thus, 'So ancient as that it is of divine institution.' You define episcopacy by being joined with imparity and superiority of jurisdiction ; but this seems short, for every arch-presbyter's place is so, unless you will define it by a distinction of order. Now grant that presbytery is of use where episcopacy is not to be had ; first, I pray you, consider whether this conversion be not needless here, and in itself of dangerous consequence : next, I conceive there is no place where episcopacy may not be had :

* Neal, vol. ii. p. 337.

† See full particulars in Heylin's Life of Laud.

thirdly, since they challenge their presbyterian fiction to be Christ's kingdom, we must not use mincing terms, but unmask them." Hall said that he had passed over the question whether episcopacy be an order or degree, as not material. Laud thought it the ground of the whole cause, and desired the bishop to weigh it and alter it.* Hall corrected the MS., and the work was published under the title of "Episcopacy by Divine Right."

Two things are evident from the preceding quotations — first, that Hall's sentiments on the subject of episcopacy were in accordance with the majority of the English church down to this period, who contended that bishops were not distinct from presbyters in order, but only in degree: secondly, that Laud's new opinions on the question of the divine right originated in the lofty and absurd pretensions of the advocates for the presbyterian polity.

Hall's work was published shortly before the commencement of the troubles. When episcopacy was attacked in 1640, Hall again stood forward as the champion of the church, and published "An Humble Remonstrance to the Parliament;" and, soon after, "A Defence of the Remonstrance." The controversy to which these works gave rise will be noticed in another chapter.

At an earlier period the removal of Laud from the councils of the king, and an alteration in some few of the ceremonies of the church, would have satisfied the parliament, the puritan clergy, and the people: now, however, the hierarchy itself must be destroyed. Though the long parliament was composed of men of very dissimilar and discordant views, there was, nevertheless, a unity of purpose and action, which he attributed to the skill of the leaders in merging their own peculiar views in their prosecution of the common object. The covenant was the contrivance of the

* Life of Laud by Heylin.

presbyterians, and the moderate men received it in consequence of the uncertainty in which they were placed. The day on which the bill of attainder against Laud passed the lords was distinguished by another act against the church, for on that day the commons passed another ordinance to abolish the liturgy. The archbishop's funeral was celebrated according to the rites of the church, though at that time the use of the common prayer exposed a clergyman to the risk of sequestration. The liturgy had long been disused, and especially in the London churches, but now it was set aside by an ordinance. By the same ordinance, the directory was substituted in its room — it was framed by the assembly of divines, and merely gave hints to the minister, leaving him to act according to his own discretion. It is the same as that still used in the church of Scotland: but though established by authority of parliament, the directory never became general in the churches, as is clear from the various complaints of the presbyterians, and the various ordinances of parliament to enforce its observance.

Episcopacy had long been abolished: but no other discipline had been erected.* Baxter censures this act of the parliament, in removing the old system before they were prepared with a new one. The fact is, at the time when episcopacy was abolished, the parliament were by no means prepared to establish presbytery. By the ordinance, the directory was enjoined on every minister, under a certain penalty: while the use of the common prayer was prohibited both in public and private. The penalty for the first offence was a fine of five pounds; for the second, a year's imprisonment. The books belonging to the respective churches were ordered to be brought in by the parish authorities to the committees sitting in every county. Yet, after all, the liturgy was held in reverence by the better part

* Vide Neal, vol. ii. p. 585.

of the nation. The Scots were exceedingly sore on the subject. A committee of the Scots parliament, writing to the English house of commons, complains, "that their kirk is more scandalised in matters of religion, which concern God, than for any thing to themselves: particularly that the service book is still retained in some places of England under the parliament's power, and the directory slighted."* As long as the war continued, the parliament would not enforce it where their authority was not recognised: but as the progress of the war brought the country into subjection, the clergy were compelled to submit, or risk the loss of their livings. At the time, however, when the presbyterians contemplated the full establishment of their system, they were thwarted by the independents: so that the directory never became universal.

A singular and confused scene was now presented in the various parishes of England. In London the churches assumed the appearance of uniformity according to the directory; but in the country disorder was predominant. Had the new discipline been set up when episcopacy was abolished, its continuance would probably have been secured; but since that time so many sects had sprung up, and so many pulpits had become occupied by sectarian individuals, that the presbyterians found it impossible to erect their platform.

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 592.

CHAPTER XVI.

1645—1648.

DISCONTENTS—SELF-DENYING ORDINANCE—THE INDEPENDENTS—TREATY AT UXBRIDGE—BATTLE OF NASEBY—KING GOES TO SCOTS—DISCUSSIONS WITH HENDERSON—DELIVERED TO PARLIAMENT—COUNCIL OF AGITATORS—KING SEIZED—REFLECTIONS—CROMWELL—VIEWS OF PARTIES—ARMY TO LONDON—ARMY AND PARLIAMENT APPEAR RECONCILED—KING ESCAPES TO ISLE OF WIGHT—SCOTS PROPOSE TERMS—HE REFUSES THE FOUR BILLS—VOTE OF NO MORE ADDRESSES—ARMY RETIRE TO QUELL DISTURBANCES—PARLIAMENT SET ON FOOT TREATY AT NEWPORT—IS INEFFECTUAL—ARMY ADVANCE TO LONDON—PRIDE'S PURGE—CHARACTER OF THE PARLIAMENT.

It has been proved, in a previous chapter, that the majority of both houses were originally conformists, and never contemplated the demolition of the church. It must, however, be admitted, that the notions of many of the members, as well as of the ministers, on the subject of church government, were loose and unsettled: they did not, therefore, hesitate to sacrifice episcopacy when the aid of the Scots was required, and could not be procured by a less costly sacrifice. The majority acted under the pressure of a supposed necessity; and from the passing of the covenant until 1640, the parliament was presbyterian in its aspect. In that year they were outwitted by the independents, who had gained the ascendancy in the army.

During the year 1646, the army of the parliament was victorious; yet the king was not subdued. The blame was, therefore, placed by the independents to the account of the generals, who were charged with lukewarmness in the cause. The dissatisfaction of that party led to a material change in the composition of the army; and the circumstances, though less religious than political, exercised so extensive an influence on the future, that they cannot be passed over without some notice.

Every reader of English history is acquainted with the nature of the self-denying ordinance. It is noticed here, because it paved the way for the ultimate ascendancy of the independents, first in the army, and subsequently in the parliament. The ordinance was a scheme of the independents. For some time they acted in concert with the presbyterians: nor did they cease to co-operate in the general measures of the parliament, until the latter ceased to prosecute the contest to the extent they desired. They acted with consummate prudence, under the guidance of experienced leaders, as Cromwell, Vane, Hazlerig, and others: they consented to the covenant, not that presbytery was more agreeable to their views than episcopacy, but because their ultimate object—the ruin of the king—could not otherwise have been accomplished. Having prepared the troops, into whose affection they had insinuated themselves, to expect some important change, the leaders, though only a minority in the house, proposed that no member of parliament should hold any post in the army. Though the scheme was unfavourable to the views of the presbyterians, they did not venture to oppose it, lest their opposition to what appeared at first sight so reasonable, should be construed into lukewarmness in the cause. The ordinance was passed: and Fairfax was nominated to succeed the Earl of Essex in the command of the army. Cromwell was probably one of the authors of this masterpiece of independent policy. The ordinance was preparatory to a new model of the army. The independents had long seen that some bold scheme was necessary to ensure the success of their party. They had thwarted every attempt at reconciliation with the king: by alarming the majority with a horrid picture of the halters and the scaffolds that awaited them, in the event of his majesty's restoration; and, by acquiring influence with the army, they gradually widened the breach between the king and the parliament. Still the army was officered by presbyterians, who were devoted to the parliament:

the independents therefore began to complain of the length of the war; and, by means of the ordinance, they effected the removal of all the influential commanders, who, as members of parliament, were compelled to resign their posts. Independents were appointed to the vacant situations. Cromwell was ordered to London, and pretended a ready compliance: but Fairfax, the general, wrote to the parliament, requesting permission for Cromwell to remain with the army during the present campaign. A vote to that effect was accordingly passed. The general suffered Cromwell "to govern and do all. When any place was void, he was sure to put a sectary in the place."*

The treaty of Uxbridge commenced about the same time. The king promised indulgence to tender consciences; and to permit a modified episcopacy, the bishop ruling in conjunction with a council of presbyters. Many days were occupied in debate; but the parliamentary commissioners would listen to no propositions short of the abolition of episcopacy, and the complete establishment of presbytery. The king was therefore required to consent to the bills already passed against the church, and to sign the covenant. Thus did the parliament refuse concessions from the king, which would have prevented all the subsequent evils, and which, at an earlier period, would have given the fullest satisfaction.

In the remodelling of the army, the expectations of the independents were not disappointed. On June 14, 1645, was fought the fatal battle of Naseby, after which the king was no longer able to appear in the field. Oxford was now almost his only stronghold. His only hopes now arose from the chance of divisions among his enemies. Harassed by perpetual fears lest Oxford should fall into the hands of the enemy, Charles formed the resolution of casting himself on the protection of the Scots army, then encamped near

* Baxter's Life and Times.

Newcastle. He privately left Oxford, and arrived in the Scottish camp on the 5th May, 1646.

Another attempt at reconciliation was made soon after the king's arrival; but nothing was concluded: and, after many conferences, the Scots delivered up the king to the commissioners appointed by both houses. Whether the Scots actually sold their sovereign, or whether they acted with purity of motive, it is not our business here to inquire. While in the Scottish camp, the king was constantly engaged in discussion with Henderson: in these disputes, the king "had clearly the advantage."* Before his death, Henderson is said to have experienced remorse for the part he had acted against the sovereign. So low was the king fallen, that any reasonable terms would have been yielded: but the independents were anxious to prevent an accommodation, and the presbyterians would only listen to such proposals as would ensure the establishment of their own system.

As the war was terminated, the parliament contemplated a disbanding of the army. They saw that it was the stronghold of the independents, and proved an insuperable obstacle to an accommodation. It is said that Cromwell stirred up the house to vote for the disbanding of the army, knowing that such a proposition would be distasteful to the troops. In such a measure the independents saw the final triumph of presbyterian principles, and the destruction of their hopes of a general toleration. The plan devised by the parliament was to send some of the troops to Ireland, and disband the rest. Measures were immediately adopted in the army to prevent the execution of the project. The council of agitators was appointed. This singular body was composed of three or four corporals and sergeants as delegates from each regiment, to form a kind of lower house; and of a certain number of officers as a council for the general, answering to

* Granger, vol. i. part ii. p. 416.

the upper house. This council represented the army, and canvassed every order of parliament with the utmost freedom. They disclaimed all intention of overthrowing presbytery : all they claimed was a universal toleration.

These proceedings met with the approbation of the independents in the commons, who, if they could not outvote the presbyterians, were determined to outwit them. They saw that the critical moment was arrived : the presbyterians were bound by the covenant to establish presbytery : the former were alarmed at the prospect of a hierarchy more intolerant than that they had abolished : and, with the army at their devotion, they were determined to demand their own terms. Cromwell was the secret mover of the whole ; through his agents, whom he had placed as subaltern officers among the troops, he persuaded the army to resist the project, while in the house he appeared to give it his sanction. It was in March 1647 when the first symptoms of discontent were discovered among the troops : they prepared and presented a petition against the measure, at which the commons were highly offended, and ordered the general to seek out its authors. A declaration of the parliament was read at the head of every regiment : but this only increased the fury of the army. The vote, however, was laid aside. The presbyterians were puzzled, for while they could command a majority in the house, the independents were supported by the army.

It was under these circumstances that the plan for seizing the royal person was projected. Cromwell was the chief mover : he had voted for the disbanding of the army, in order that the troops might have some colour for their opposition. So convinced were the commons of his duplicity, that they had determined to commit him to the tower ; but the design was disclosed by some of his friends, and he quitted London for the army.

Almost every individual can refer to some critical period

of his life, as that on which much of his subsequent success or misfortune depended. The above occasion was such a period in the life of Cromwell. His seizure would probably have prevented many of the subsequent evils. The army was now his only resource: and there his influence was unbounded. The agitators proposed that religious matters should not be intrusted to any human authority: on this principle Cromwell acted, encouraging every sect. With the army at his command, he could set the parliament at defiance. At this time no one could have imagined that he was destined to act so conspicuous a part in the affairs of this country: he was one of those singular characters occasionally raised up by Providence to control the destinies of nations: but that he should ever arrive at such a pinnacle of greatness as to rival in power the most illustrious monarchs who had wielded the British sceptre, could never have been foreseen by any one. The events of the times were the occasion of calling forth his latent energies.

During these dissensions between the army and parliament, the agitators, fearful of an accommodation as the ruin of their hopes, conceived and executed one of the boldest measures recorded in the page of history,—the seizure of the royal person. On the night of the 4th of June, 1647, Cornet Joyce came to Holmby, whither the sovereign had been removed from the Scottish camp, and secured the person of the king, under the pretence that a design was on foot to carry him away by force. This project destroyed the hopes of the parliament, who saw no prospect of a settlement except on such terms as the army should dictate. Joyce conducted his majesty to the army, then encamped near Cambridge. The intelligence of the king's seizure was swiftly conveyed to London, and filled the houses with consternation. They were informed by the general, that the soldiery had removed him by his own consent: that neither he nor the officers were concerned: that they had no intention of

opposing presbytery; but would leave all to the wisdom of parliament.

The seizure of the royal person is a mystery that will never be unravelled. That Joyce was more than the instrument is not probable: Cromwell was, undoubtedly, the prime mover. When Cromwell told Charles that he was not privy to the seizure, the king added, that he must hang Joyce, as a proof of the truth of his assertion. At this time it is probable that the agitators would have been willing to restore the king, on the promise of liberty of conscience: but, whatever may have been their original views, they soon became republicans, and were the proximate cause of the king's death. It is said that Cromwell was not unfriendly to Charles, until he saw that the army was determined to resist his restoration. From the parliament Cromwell could expect nothing: and at this period he, perhaps, contemplated the restoration of the king. He soon discovered, however, that he must either coalesce with the agitators, whom he could no longer govern, or lose his influence with the army. He was possessed of a clear judgment—had a keen insight into human nature—was versed in the arts of managing the people—and had no small share of duplicity in his character: but, still, the final success of these measures could not at this time be clearly foreseen.

The army removed with the king to St. Alban's, for the purpose of intimidating the parliament. Their demands were now embodied in a declaration, in which they dictated the policy to be pursued by the parliament, declaring, at the same time, that they had no desire to overthrow presbytery or establish independency, but only sought for liberty of conscience. They next impeached eleven of the most eminent presbyterian members, on the ground that they had fomented a misunderstanding between the parliament and the army. The obnoxious members withdrew; the parliament consenting to receive any charges produced by the army, and granting

them a month's pay. This was a sop thrown to Cerberus. To oppose the army was impossible, as the presbyterians, though a large majority in parliament, had no available force. The London apprentices sent in petitions against the army, and the house rescinded their former votes. An adjournment for a day was moved: and, during the night, the speakers of both houses, with many of the members, secretly retired to the army, under the pretence that they were under the restraint of the mob. Their absence, however, did not prevent the members at Westminster from voting the king to London. The desertion of the members afforded a pretext for marching to London: the seceding members were restored; and the parliament and army appeared reconciled.

During these movements the king remained with the army: he hoped to reap some advantage from these divisions. His situation was improved: all approached him with respect: and his chaplains, who were refused admission into his presence by the commissioners, were permitted to attend. He secretly favoured the addresses of both army and parliament: but, from the period of his removal to London, his condition was materially altered. The army now demanded a toleration—that the acts prohibiting the use of the liturgy should be repealed: and that the covenant should not be imposed.

Amidst this confusion the king escaped from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight. It is said that Cromwell recommended this step, on the ground that he could no longer be responsible for the conduct of the army. Ludlow states, that the agitators suspected Cromwell of carrying on a secret treaty with the king, which they were determined to prevent, and that Cromwell informed Charles of their intentions, advising him, at the same time, to escape. The agitators now declared that monarchy was incompatible with the welfare of the nation. It is not easy to decide whether such

were Cromwell's sentiments at this time. It is asserted, on what grounds it is difficult to determine, that he only joined the agitators when unable to control their proceedings. His real intentions, however, were locked up within his own bosom.

Under all his misfortunes, Charles preserved his dignity : so far was he from sinking under the pressure of distress, that he probably enjoyed as much composure now as he experienced in Oxford amidst the disputes of his followers. Intelligence of the king's arrival in the Isle of Wight was communicated to the parliament : and, shortly after, he submitted certain proposals to their consideration, in which he offers to permit presbyterian government to continue for three years, provided he and others might enjoy a free toleration. His other proposals were equally liberal : but no accommodation was effected.

During the king's residence at Hampton Court the Scots commissioners had intimated that their country would unite with the presbyterians to deliver him from the army, on the condition of his sacrificing episcopacy. To this sacrifice the king could not consent. The independents laboured to prevent a reconciliation on any terms ; but the parliament agreed to treat with his majesty, if he would first consent to four bills agreed upon by the two houses : his majesty demanded a personal treaty, and nothing was effected. In the mean time the Scots were displeased with the commons, now under the influence of the independent faction, in consequence of the general disregard of the covenant : on this rock both the Scots and English presbyterians split : for, during the disputes on these controversial points, the army stepped in, and rejected the proposals both of king and parliament. While they were wrangling in the house on the subjects of episcopacy and presbytery, the army bore away the prize. The Scots privately proposed terms to the king, of a more liberal nature than those of the parliament : he was required to establish

presbytery, and to confirm the covenant; but the use of the liturgy was not denied to the king and his household. These proposals came too late; for the army was in a situation to dictate terms to all parties.

At the period of the treaty in the Isle of Wight, the presbyterians were as intolerant as ever. The army was composed of sects, who saw their own ruin in the triumph of presbytery: the officers were all independents and sectaries, and their influence over the men was unbounded. The king signed the treaty with the Scots, but refused to comply with the four bills of the English parliament. His answer was read in January 1647-8. Cromwell spoke warmly against his majesty: and the commons, now under the influence of the army, voted that no more addresses should be sent to, nor messages received from, his majesty. The commons hoped that some favourable occurrence would transpire, to enable them to retrace their steps, and retract this vote. From the month of August 1647, when the army marched to London, the independents ruled the parliament. In the following spring several movements occurred in various counties in favour of the king; and the troops were consequently removed from London. The Scots also were now advancing towards England, to act with the English presbyterians. By these movements the troops were withdrawn to a distance; and during their absence the presbyterians regained their influence, and voted that the government should be in king, lords, and commons;—that a treaty should be set on foot with his majesty;—and that they would adhere to the covenant, and unite with the Scots on their entrance into England. Their plans were, however, defeated by the ruin of the Scots army. In the treaty with the king the parliament were as stubborn as ever in not even allowing the use of the liturgy in the royal household. The conference began at Newport on the 18th September. The commissioners demanded the full and final establishment of presbytery: the

king, agreeably to his former promise, consented to confirm it for three years, during which space a settled form of government might be determined by the assembly, and others of his majesty's nomination. Religion was the only question at issue: all other points were settled. In November, the king further consented not to use the common prayer, if he might use some other form. Still the commons refused to yield. Time was passing away; and Cromwell, who had been sent against the Scots, was on the eve of returning with the army. Still the intolerance of the presbyterians triumphed over their fears, and the scruples of the king were disregarded. Had the parliament discovered the same willingness to make concessions as his majesty, the breach would now have been healed. Their conduct was obstinate and unwise: obstinate, for they yielded nothing, while they required the king to surrender every thing; unwise, for they must have known that the army was returning, and that they must submit. Baxter censures the commissioners at this treaty, for not assenting to Usher's scheme, which was proposed by his majesty.*

A remonstrance was now prepared by the army, in which they deprecate the course taken by the parliament, and demand that the king should be brought to justice. On the 30th November the king was again seized by the army; and on the 1st December the general intimated to the two houses that the army were about to march to London. On the 4th the parliament voted that the king's removal was without their knowledge or consent; and on the following day they had the courage to vote that his majesty's concessions were a sufficient ground to proceed upon for the settlement of the peace of the kingdom. This vote was carried without a division; but it was useless: the golden opportunity was past; and the army were at the door. Had they yielded in

* Baxter, part i. p. 62.

a few points, even at the eleventh hour, the monarchy might have been saved.

On the 6th December, Colonel Pride, with a party of soldiers, was stationed in the avenues leading to the house of commons. Forty members were seized by the military, and admission was denied to one hundred more. Thus, 140 presbyterian members were excluded by the army. From this time the independents were left in uncontrolled dominion. Still the blame rests on the presbyterians, for refusing to yield to the just scruples of the king in the treaty at Newport. Every one now saw that confusion would ensue; yet few could repress the feeling of joy, that these men, who had refused all concessions, should at last be compelled to succumb to the usurped authority of the army. This act was denominated Colonel Pride's purge. The house of commons was now composed of independents and sectaries. The vote, that his "majesty's concessions were a sufficient ground on which to treat," was immediately rescinded, and the trial of the king was determined on. The reign of presbytery was now concluded. Different views have been formed by different persons of the character of this parliament up to the period of its purgation by Pride. "After every allowance," says an able writer, "he must bring very heated passions to the records of these times, who does not perceive in the conduct of the parliament a series of glaring violations, not only of positive and constitutional, but of those higher principles which are paramount to all immediate policy." After enumerating many of their unconstitutional acts, he adds, "Of the parliament it may be said, that scarce two or three public acts of justice, humanity, or generosity, and very few of political wisdom, are recorded of them, from their quarrel with the king to their expulsion by Cromwell."* Neal and others

* Hallam, vol. ii. p. 209.

attempt to justify the parliament for not yielding to his majesty's proposals at Newport, on the ground that the king's word could not be depended on; but, remarks the writer just quoted, "no candid reader can doubt that a serious sense of obligation was predominant in Charles's persevering fidelity to the English church."* If, indeed, Charles was the character insinuated by Neal, why did he not comply with propositions of the parliament, in the hope of being able to evade them when his power should become established? His very refusal proves the sincerity of his intentions.

CHAPTER XVII.

1642—1648.

ORDINANCES AGAINST SUPERSTITION — CONDUCT OF THE RABBLE AND SOLDIERS — CROSSES AND RELICS — CATHEDRALS AND CHURCHES DESECRATED — EXCESSES — SUFFERINGS OF THE CLERGY — COVENANT IMPOSED.

HAVING in the preceding chapter sketched the proceedings of the king and parliament until the ascendancy of the army at the close of the war, we now return a little to narrate the other actions of the parliament—actions that could not be interwoven with the previous narrative.

It has already been stated, that the zeal of the commons was directed against what were termed idolatrous monuments. It could not be expected, that when the ministers of religion were so severely treated, the churches would escape. Hence, the cathedrals, and many of the parochial edifices, were exposed to the wanton attacks, first

* Hallam, vol. ii. p. 255.

of the lawless rabble, and then of a disorderly soldiery, who spared nothing eminent for beauty or venerable for antiquity. The crosses at Cheapside, and other places, were demolished by the persons to whom the execution of the parliamentary ordinances were intrusted. The celebrated cross of St. Paul's, where so many sermons had, during the days of Elizabeth, been delivered against popery, was destroyed as a popish relic.* In the various orders issued by the commons, relics, crucifixes, and monuments of idolatry, were ordered to be removed. The reader must not, however, imagine that crucifixes were erected in the churches up to the year 1640, as they had been in the times of popery. The remains of the ancient crosses erected by our ancestors are still visible in many secluded village churchyards. Many of them had escaped the havoc committed at the reformation. It is probable, that by the term "crucifix," these crosses, and others on the monuments of the dead, were intended. At all events, the zeal of the rabble led to the entire demolition of these interesting ornaments of the burial-ground. Some of them still exist in a perfect state, and the remains of others are discovered in many retired villages. In some places, the cross is erected in the centre of the village, and is usually overshadowed by the luxuriant branches of a spreading oak or elm. Prior to the reformation, almost every village possessed one of these crosses, either in the churchyard or in the street; and from the steps, by which they are usually surrounded, the friars of various orders were accustomed to address the rustic audience. When the zeal of the people, at the time of the reformation, had spent itself, they became as anxious to preserve these memorials of their ancestors as they had just before been to destroy them. The mutilated state of many of these ancient crosses is an evidence

* When the two houses went in procession to a feast prepared for them by the city, a quantity of crosses, pictures, and relics, were burnt on a scaffold in Cheapside.—WHITELOCK, p. 82.

of the zeal with which the parliamentary ordinances were executed.

The term "relic" also occurs in the ordinance; but no unprejudiced person will imagine, that relics, in the popish sense, were admitted into the English churches. To reflect odium on the clergy, the parliament chose to apply this designation to the statues, monumental busts, and other memorials of the dead, with which our cathedral and parochial churches abounded. Pictures were also deemed idolatrous. Even under the protectorate, Jeremy Taylor was actually imprisoned, in consequence of a frontispiece to his "Holy Living and Dying." This frontispiece was a representation of the Saviour, and was prefixed, not by Taylor, but by the bookseller. Such representations were then deemed scandalous, and tending to idolatry. In one of the editions of the Bishop's Bible, the large G at the head of one of the chapters, represents a naked Leda with her swan. The circumstance arose from the carelessness of the printer, who, instead of placing the figure in Ovid, fixed it in the Bible. The mistake was never discovered by the puritans, or the circumstance would have been adduced, as affording additional evidence of a popish leaning on the part of the bishops and episcopal clergy. That the orders were extensively carried into effect, is evident from the state of our churches. In the cathedral of Bristol is an inscription on an ancient tomb, in which it is stated that it was defaced during the civil wars, and restored subsequent to the restoration. Such instances are common in other places. The zeal of our early reformers had removed from the churches every thing calculated to give offence, and even some things which prudence would have spared; but the zeal of the parliament was more ardent, and did not spare many of the vestiges of antiquity, which had escaped the violence of the reformation. It is indeed matter of surprise, that any ancient monument was preserved. Had the orders been as strictly fulfilled in all

places as they were in some, all the memorials of past ages would have perished. It is scarcely possible to account for the conduct of the parliament in their indiscriminate attack on every thing ancient and sacred. Our cathedrals are some of the most interesting monuments of antiquity. There are inscribed the actions of the dead,—their deeds of glory, achieved in the senate or in the field, the recollection of which serves to excite others to noble exertion in their country's cause. Here, too, the artist can trace the progress of the fine arts, from the earliest period of our history down to the present time. Every man of taste and good feeling must regret the devastations committed on these magnificent structures. Of all the vestiges of antiquity in this country, the cathedrals and the abbey churches are the most interesting, both to the man of state and the christian. The latter, as he treads their stately, though gloomy, aisles, meditates on the change effected in the worship of these venerable piles by the reformation: the former dwells on the history of his ancestors, and compares the state of the fine arts in their days with the state in which they are at present. Here the antiquary may gratify his peculiar taste; the historian dwell on the heroes whose actions he records; and the reflecting of all ranks learn a lesson concerning their own immortality, the vanity of earthly distinctions, and the sublunary nature of all created objects.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the crosses in churchyards, and the images in churches, were not the objects of adoration; yet an indiscriminate attack was commenced on all the vestiges of antiquity: every sepulchral ornament was viewed as an idolatrous monument; and if some of them were preserved, their escape was owing to the good feeling of the parties to whom the orders were entrusted. The parochial authorities were ordered to remove the obnoxious objects; and to their piety and forbearance is the country indebted for those monuments that still remain.

The parish churches did not suffer so much as the cathedrals; the former fell into the hands of the presbyterian clergy, and were partially preserved.

In some cathedrals the public records were burnt: some of these venerable structures were converted into stables. Horses were lodged in St. Paul's church, and in St. George's chapel at Windsor. When the body of Charles was deposited in the royal chapel, the carving of the stalls was torn off, and stakes were driven into the ground for the purpose of securing the horses of the soldiers. In some places, horses and swine were baptised in derision. At Westminster, the soldiers drank and smoked at the altar: the brass tablets on the pavement, as is still evident, were torn up and sold: the king's arms were removed from the churches, as marks of antichrist: and the commandments replaced by the covenant. The surplices were torn, as remnants of Babylon; and the books of common prayer were in many places burnt as popish mass books. By these militant saints the worship of the English church was classed with popery. The communion plate was plundered: and in many instances the fonts were used as troughs for the troopers' horses. At Warwick, Colchester, and other places, the sanctuaries of the dead were violated, for the purpose of making merchandise of the leaden coffins: the hair was torn from the bodies of Lady Lucas and Lady Killegrew, and worn in their hats by the mob, by way of triumph. At Winchester, the bones of some of the bishops were strewn about the pavement: and at Sudley, the pulpit was converted into shambles for meat. In allusion to the churches being used as stables, it was wittily observed, that they had a thorough reformation in England, for that even the horses went to church.*

* At Canterbury the soldiers stabbed the arras hangings in the choir, on which was the figure of the Saviour: "Here is Christ," said one, "I will stab him."—In Westminster Abbey, where the soldiers were actually quartered, they wore the surplice at the game of hare and hounds; he who wore the surplice being the hare.—*Mercurius Rusticus*, pp. 206, 224, 236.

Baxter states, that in some places the lower classes interfered, and rescued the crosses from destruction: in other places, however, they acted with the parliamentary commissioners. So zealous were the Londoners, that "they pulled down the sign of Charing Cross, hung up at a tavern near the place where the cross stood."* In August, 1643, it was ordered by the commons, that all crosses and superstitious monuments should be taken away by the ensuing November. There is a clause in the ordinance, prohibiting its application to pictures or images graven only for the monuments of the dead. This clause was disregarded: nor did the parliament interfere when their commissioners exceeded the letter of the ordinance. Several petitions were presented from different counties, complaining that the churches were profaned, the ornaments defaced, and the utensils abused: yet their petitions were unnoticed.† It should be remembered that many of the devastations were committed by the soldiers, who, as sectaries, were even more fearful of popery than the independents. Wherever they descried a painted window in a church, they either broke it with their pikes, or by discharging their muskets. At Chichester they tore the eyes from a picture of Edward VI., exclaiming, that all the mischief arose from his establishing the common prayer: and at Canterbury they fired no less than forty shots at a statue of Christ over the gate of the cathedral, shouting in triumph whenever the balls struck the face or eyes of the image. Spoliation kept pace with the advances of the army. Parties of soldiers were accustomed to scour the country around their different quarters in quest of superstitious monuments. Almost every church approached by the army underwent a complete purgation of those detestable pollutions, painted windows and monumental effigies. In one church, Ireton destroyed the paintings of the apostles, but preserved that of the dragon

* Rushworth, vol. iv. p. 308.

† Comp. Hist. vol. iii. pp. 111, 119.

vomiting flames: a circumstance that led the people to remark, that it was evident who was Ireton's saint. The painted windows of some of the colleges in Cambridge were saved, at the intercession of Cromwell: others were taken down and concealed till the restoration: but many were destroyed. The state of Oxford will be noticed when the visitation of that university is described.

Organs were among the obnoxious objects. In many cases they were broken: in others sold: and some were set up in taverns.

The sequestrations of the clergy, from the year 1640 to the taking of the covenant, have been detailed: it is now time to look back, for the purpose of describing the deprivations and misery to which the episcopal clergy were subjected from the latter period till the close of the war. At the commencement of the ejections no test was imposed. By the terms of the ordinance, the scandalous clergy were to be sequestered: and in that term were included all who were friendly to the royal cause. Attachment to the liturgy, even before the abolition of the government of the church, exposed a clergyman to suspicion. When, however, the covenant was introduced, a test was furnished for proving the principles of the clergy who had hitherto escaped. The committees were sitting in almost every county when the covenant was taken. New committees were not formed: but those already in existence were armed with authority to offer the covenant to all the clergy. Escape was now rendered almost impossible. Previous to this period, many and various charges were alleged against the suspected clergy, so that, if one failed, success might be insured on another: but now, a ready and certain test was supplied, and all who refused were sequestered. The titles of the ordinances were, indeed, the same; and the charges of immorality were not relinquished: but in those cases where no charges were brought, the covenant was applied, as a sure test of their principles.

As the course of an invading army may be traced by the desolation and misery that follow in its train, so the progress of the committees was discovered by the ruin of families, which met the eye in every direction. It is not clear whether the covenant was universally tendered, or only to suspected individuals. The probability is that it was generally proposed; though, in some few places, as Baxter states, the parliament were unable to enforce it.

It is difficult to conceive why the committees continued to receive charges against the clergy, when they were furnished with so effectual a test, unless for the purpose of blackening their character. There was no disgrace attached to a refusal of the covenant: whereas, if the committees could bring odium on the clergy, by insinuating charges against their characters, they were at once rendered obnoxious to the people. They gladly availed themselves, therefore, of any charge which the malice of their enemies could invent; knowing that if the charge failed of being proved, the covenant would secure their sequestration. Almost all the sequestrations were, however, for refusing the covenant. Walker affirms, that all the old men in his day, who knew any of the sequestered clergy, stated that they were ejected for refusing the covenant. In the diocese of Norwich alone, 200 or 300 were sequestered for refusing to subscribe; and it is probable that there was an equal proportion in other diocesses. Vast numbers were ejected, as has been shewn, between 1640 and 1643, but the time was short: whereas the reign of the covenant extended from 1643 till 1649.

Even Neal condemns the imposition of the covenant, as "a new weapon put into the hands of the committees, which enabled them, with more ease and certainty, to discover malignant or disaffected clergymen."* In the very next sentence Neal contradicts himself; for he states that, instead

* Vol. iii. p. 83.

of producing witnesses, as they had previously done, they tendered the covenant, which, being refused, occasioned the report "that the clergy were removed from their livings only for refusing the covenant; whereas their sequestration was grounded upon other causes, or, at least, the articles of immorality or disaffection were almost always joined with it." He admits that no witnesses were produced under the covenant: how then can he insinuate that the clergy were expelled for immorality? by joining the charge of immorality to the refusal to take the covenant, they only added insult to injustice. The truth is, the committees were glad of any pretence for sequestering a loyal clergyman: and though the covenant alone was sufficient for their purpose, yet, in order to degrade the clergy, other charges were specified in the deeds of sequestration. Neal states, that it was tendered only to the suspected and disaffected: that is, it was proposed to those who were likely to refuse it. The same author remarks, that "none were turned out or imprisoned for adhering to the doctrine or discipline of the church, till after the imposing of the covenant, but for immorality, false doctrine, non-residence, or for taking part with the king against the parliament."* It would indeed have been strange in the parliament to eject for adherence to the ceremonies of the church, at a time when they themselves were avowed members of the episcopal hierarchy, and professed only to require a few alterations: yet can it be denied that, even before the

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 25. — "The truth is," says Lilly, speaking of a clergyman who was accused before the committee, "he had a considerable parsonage, and that only was enough to sequester any moderate judgment. In these times many worthy ministers lost their livings for not complying with the *Threepenny* Directory. Had you seen what pitiful idiots were preferred into sequestered benefices, you would have been grieved in your soul: but when they came before the classes of divines, could these simpletons only say they were converted by hearing such a sermon, such a lecture, of that godly man, Hugh Peters, Stephen Marshal, or any of that gang, he was presently admitted."—LILLY'S *Life*, p. 136, new edit.

covenant, the charges adduced against the clergy were the observance of the ceremonies enjoined in the rubric ?]

The churches were now become presbyterian in their aspect: the covenant was hung up in the place of the creed and commandments; and the presbyterian clergy held most of the livings. It is true the presbyterians never succeeded in establishing their system in all its glory: but the cause of their failure must be sought, not in any want of inclination on their part, but in the ascendancy of the independents. The clergy who were attached to the liturgy necessarily hated the covenant. Of the bishops, some were in prison, and others in exile; while many of the clergy, and even some of the prelates, were reduced to the necessity of sheltering themselves under the roof of noble or distinguished families. In these peaceful retreats, many of the more eminent sequestered clergy, secured from the ravages of war, enjoyed the sweets of domestic life, and the pleasures of the social family circle: yet even here they were not permitted to use their own beautiful liturgy. Whenever they availed themselves of an opportunity of celebrating divine service according to the book of common prayer, they did so at the risk of incurring a severe penalty.

It is admitted by the advocates of the parliament, that many of the pious episcopal clergy suffered severely under the covenant. Neal asserts, that the presbyterian hierarchy was as narrow as the prelatical; and equally, if not more insufferable. The committees in the country were composed of ministers and tradesmen, who, in general, were animated with bitter hatred towards the loyal clergy. At a subsequent period the neglect of the directory was added to the usual list of charges. Several charges were usually specified,—as bowing at the name of Jesus, superstition, malignancy, immorality, and refusing the covenant: and when the ejection took place, the distinct charge on which it was grounded was never stated. In many cases all the respectable inhabitants

of the parish petitioned the committees in favour of their clergyman, stating his blameless life and diligence in the performance of his sacred function : but these representations were disregarded ; for when no charge could with decency be brought, the covenant was tendered, and a refusal subjected the individual to sequestration.

It was in the country especially that the clergy were ejected under the covenant : in London, and the garrisons of the parliament, presbyterians had possession of the churches ; and as the different parts of the country came under the dominion of the two houses, the covenant was imposed on the clergy. Numbers were ejected by the county committees : in Herefordshire sixty, in Northamptonshire one hundred, and in Hampshire the same number, were dispossessed in a short space. Sometimes a successor was appointed immediately : at other times the proceeds of the living were paid into the hands of the sequestrators, who provided for the spiritual wants of the parish by casual assistance. "After the covenant," says an able writer, often quoted, "a severe persecution fell on the faithful sons of the Anglican church. Many had already been sequestered, or even subjected to imprisonment, by the parliamentary committees for scandalous ministers, or by subordinate committees of the same kind set up in each county within their quarters : sometimes on the score of immorality or false doctrine, more frequently for what they termed malignancy, or attachment to the king and his party. Yet many men, who meddled not with politics, might hope to elude this inquisition. But the covenant drove out all who were too conscientious to pledge themselves to reject a polity which they generally believed to be of divine institution."* The same writer, speaking of the unconstitutional acts of the parliament, says, "Witness their committees for scandalous ministers, under which denomina-

* Hallam, vol. ii. p. 226.

tion, adding reproach to infamy, they subjected all who did not reach the standard of puritan perfection to contumely and vexation, and ultimately to expulsion from their lawful property.”*

CHAPTER XVIII.

1645 — 1648.

PROCEEDINGS SUBSEQUENT TO THE WAR.

ENDEAVOURS TO SETTLE THE NEW DISCIPLINE—ORIGIN OF THE INDEPENDENTS—ENTHUSIASM—CHARACTER OF THE ARMY—CHRISTMAS AND THE FESTIVALS—PRESBYTERIAN ORDINATION—PRESBYTERIAN DISCIPLINE—PARLIAMENT REFUSES TO RECOGNISE THE “JUS DIVINUM”—QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE ASSEMBLY—PROGRESS OF INDEPENDENCY.

As soon as the fortune of war had placed the sovereign in the power of the parliament, that assembly began in earnest to settle the affairs of the church. The covenant had converted the two houses into avowed presbyterians, all being viewed as “ill-affected”† who were backward to take that test. The parliament were not inactive in matters of religion even during the war: the various orders against crosses and relics, and the sequestrations of the clergy, are proofs of their diligence in modelling the church after their own fashion. Nor were they inattentive to pecuniary profit, for, in 1644, the candlesticks, crucifixes, and plate in St. Paul’s cathedral, were ordered to be sold.

When the war closed, they were left more at liberty to order the church after the new model. As the parliament became masters of particular towns and districts during the

* Hallam, vol. ii. p. 192.

† Whitelock, p. C6.

war, they were reduced into obedience in matters ecclesiastical, by the usual process of sequestration of the loyal clergy : numerous obstacles, however, presented themselves. As soon as the king was reduced, they found a new enemy in the army. The opposition of the independents has been stated : and it may be proper here to state their origin in the house of commons. They sprang from the ancient Brownists : and during the reign of James, most of them retired to Holland, where they erected their own discipline. At the commencement of the long parliament they returned to England : but they were inconsiderable in number. "The only noted sectary," says Baxter, "in the upper house, was Lord Brook, and the younger Vane in the lower. By degrees their number increased : many being added to their ranks from the violent measures of the presbyterians. Under the management of their experienced leaders, Cromwell, Vane, and others, they continued to increase in numbers and influence, until they acquired sufficient courage to propose, and sufficient strength to carry, the self-denying ordinance, which gave them the ascendancy in the army, by whose aid they ultimately succeeded in overawing the parliament. Many of their proceedings will fall under our notice in a future page, when the actions of the Westminster assembly are recorded.

The re-modelling of the army was the fruit of the self-denying ordinance. The old regiments were broken up, and new ones formed out of the mass of troops composing the old army. Over these regiments were placed officers of independent principles. When the regiments were broken up, the chaplains were no longer wanted. Hitherto, every regiment had been favoured with the ministrations of a presbyterian chaplain : the independents had long been anxious to rid the army of these chaplains whose influence over the men was considerable. The former army was broken up, to serve as a pretext for dismissing the officers and chaplains : many officers, who were not members of

parliament, refused to act under the new model, and the management of the army fell into the hands of the independents. It was almost entirely destitute of chaplains, and the officers assumed that office themselves. All the soldiers were more or less tinctured with the prevailing enthusiasm: the views of the leaders were soon communicated to the men. The independents were opposed to a settled ministry; consequently, the practices of the officers were in strict accordance with the new principles. It was no uncommon occurrence in those days, for an officer to ascend the pulpit in the churches near which the army was quartered, in opposition to the parochial clergy. Baxter was an eye-witness of a singular scene. When the army was quartered in Buckinghamshire, some sectaries had appointed a religious conference in a parish church: on the day appointed, some of the soldiers attended to encourage their brethren, and Baxter went with the intention of opposing them. The cornet and his troopers occupied the gallery, and Baxter the desk: the discussion was protracted through a whole day; when at length the soldiers departed. He states, that they would have claimed the victory if he had gone out first. "After the conference," says Baxter, "I conversed with the sectarian lecturer, whom they had thrust in against the will of the incumbent, and found him little wiser than the rest." *

Baxter attributes the ruin of the presbyterian cause to the removal of the chaplains: "I saw that it was the ministers that had lost all by forsaking the army, and betaking themselves to an easier and quieter way of life. At Edgehill, almost all of them went home; and as the sectaries increased, they were the more averse to go into the army." † Both Baxter and Neal date the rise of enthusiasm in the army from the absence of the chaplains. When the officers

* Baxter, part i. p. 56.

† Ibid. part i. p. 51.

applied for new chaplains, says Neal, "the presbyterian ministers, being possessed of warm benefices, were unwilling to undergo the fatigues of another campaign, or, it may be, to serve with men of such desperate measures."* He then adds, "the army being destitute of chaplains, the officers set up for preachers, depending upon a kind of miraculous assistance of the spirit, without any study or preparation: nor did the evil rest there; for, from preaching at the head of their regiments, they took possession of the country pulpits, till at length they spread the infection over the whole nation, and brought the regular ministry into contempt."† The only men actually appointed were such individuals as Hugh Peters, who were as enthusiastic as the officers.

But, though enthusiasm spread rapidly through the army, the most strict discipline was maintained, which rendered them formidable, and, in action, almost invincible. Cromwell was indifferent as to the opinions of the officers and men; by indulging them all in their own peculiar opinions, all were united in one common bond. The popular feeling is easily excited: not so easily allayed. Frequently has the fury of the mob been stirred up to answer a particular purpose, and when the object has been gained, it has been found impossible to appease it. It was so with the army: it became excited, but the excitement could not be allayed. The enthusiasm of the army may, however, be traced back to the parliamentary votes against images and relics.

The army of the parliament presented an appearance altogether unlike that of armies in general: they were orderly and sober; the singing of psalms occupied the place of songs; instead of spending their leisure hours in frivolous conversation or amusements, they occupied themselves in praying, reading the scriptures, and discussing the most

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 270.

† Ibid.

abstruse points of divinity. In the camp they were tractable; in the field, terrible; and at the sight of what were deemed objects of superstition, their fury was ungovernable. Even the monument of their former general, the Earl of Essex, was broken down soon after its erection, in consequence of an effigy of the earl with which it was adorned. Breaking the windows of churches was termed a reformation, and plundering the clergy was spoiling the Egyptians. Some of them, says Calamy, "would vent the most horrid oaths, as the effect of knowledge in the fanatic strain, which they would father upon the Spirit."

Though the army was opposed to the views of the presbyterians, they did not break out into opposition to the parliament till after the close of the war: for a considerable time they presented no obstacle to the houses in settling the church. Episcopacy and the liturgy had been abolished; and, to complete the work, another ordinance was carried in 1646, by which it was decreed, that the very name of bishop should be abolished. At an earlier period, maypoles had been prohibited by an ordinance; and now the holidays of the English church were attacked. During the war, it was the practice of the parliament to appoint frequent days of fasting and humiliation; and, in addition to these occasional fasts, there was one observed on a certain day monthly. In 1644, the day chanced to fall on Christmas-day. It was doubted by some whether the fast should be celebrated; but on the 10th an ordinance was passed, that "the fast appointed on a certain day in every month be observed till otherwise ordered; and particularly, that this day be kept with more humiliation, because it may call to mind our sins and those of our forefathers, who turned this feast, pretending the memory of Christ, into forgetfulness of him, by giving liberty to carnal delights." * In a sermon on this

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 460.

occasion, before the commons, Calamy says, "I think the superstition of this day is so rooted into it, that there is no way to reform it, but by dealing with it as Hezekiah did with the brazen serpent. This year, God, by his providence, has buried this feast in a fast, and I hope it will never rise again."* In 1647, Christmas-day, with other festivals, was completely abolished. The apprentices of London were again used as the instruments of the presbyterians: they came to the house with a petition for the abolition of saints' days. The festivals, in obedience to their call, were set aside by ordinance, on the ground that they had been superstitiously observed; and the first Tuesday in every month was, by the same ordinance, assigned to apprentices and servants as a day of recreation.† The people, however, were not unanimous in desiring the abolition of the festivals; for a complaint was made, that some tradesmen had been abused by the mob for opening their shops on Christmas-day; other complaints were made of the clergy for preaching on that day: when the house ordered the committee for plundered ministers to examine and punish churchwardens who countenanced malignant ministers.‡

The question of tithes was often agitated during these tempestuous times. The revenues of the bishops and cathedral clergy were seized for the use of the state; but the property of the parochial clergy was retained by the presbyterians. When the people, in some instances, refused to pay the dues of the clergy, an order was issued for the regular payment of tithes. The subject will again be noticed, in treating of the state of religion under the independents.

Had not the independents thwarted the attempts of the

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 169. Yet Calamy, some years before, came from his sick-bed to the pulpit on Christmas-day, declaring, "that he thought himself in conscience bound to preach that day, lest the stones of the streets should cry out against him."—GREY, vol. ii. p. 278.

† Rushworth, vol. vi. p. 146.

‡ Ibid. vol. vi. p. 323.

presbyterians, their government would, probably, have been firmly established. The directory was substituted in the room of the liturgy, as soon as it was prepared by the assembly. It was ordered to be universally observed, and the register of births, marriages, and burials, to be kept in every parish.* Still, it was not universally observed, as is clear from the frequent complaints of its neglect, and the repeated ordinances for its observance. The book of discipline was next prepared by the divines of the assembly: but, when it was completed, the independents had sufficient power to prevent the parliament from carrying it fully into execution. To supply the vacancies occasioned by the numerous sequestrations of the episcopal clergy, an ordinance was passed in September 1644, empowering ten ministers of the assembly, and thirteen ministers of the city, or any seven of them, to exercise the power of ordination. This was the first attempt of the presbyterians to supply the lack of preachers after the downfall of the church. During the next year, another ordinance was issued, prohibiting unordained persons from preaching, except for the purpose of trying their gifts before persons appointed by the parliament. Soon after, the assembly were commanded to frame a directory for the ordination of ministers without the presence of a bishop. In 1645 this directory was presented to the parliament, who issued their ordinance to continue it twelve months on trial. Subsequent to the war it was made perpetual.

By the ordinance, the power of conferring ordination was granted to the classical presbyters within their respective boundaries. The candidate was required to produce a certificate of his having taken the covenant, and of his moral character. He was called to expound before the presbytery some given text. If the presbytery were satisfied, an intimation was forwarded to the parish to which the candidate was appointed, and a notice affixed to the church doors,

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 449.

to the effect that a certain number of the parishioners should appear before the presbytery to signify their consent, or, otherwise, to forward their exceptions. If no exception was taken, the candidate was ordained in the church in which he was to serve. The ceremony consisted of preaching, prayer, a declaration of faith on the part of the candidate, and the imposition of hands. Ministers episcopally ordained were admitted to churches after examination only. When this ordinance was issued, the presbyteries were not erected: therefore, the assembly were empowered to ordain until the frame of church government was completed.

Since the abolition of the ancient hierarchy, no regular system had existed. The subject was submitted to the assembly, who drew up the form of government, and voted it to be of divine appointment: but the parliament were not willing to admit the *jus divinum*, and were determined to retain the power of the keys in their own hands. When the matter was debated, the presbyterians attended early in the commons, in order that the question might be carried before the house was full. Glyn and Whitelock, however, being aware of the trick, kept the house in debate until the attendance was full, when the question was negatived; and, instead of the clause asserting the *jus divinum*, another was substituted, declaring only that congregational, classical, and synodical assemblies were agreeable to the word of God. Glyn and Whitelock received the thanks of divers members for preventing the surprisal of the house.* This was a sad disappointment for the presbyterians: the Scots commissioners were alarmed: and a petition, signed by several ministers, was presented to the house, praying them to establish presbytery, as the discipline of Jesus Christ. The petition was voted scandalous, and the petitioners sharply rebuked.

The presbyterians asserted, that all church power was

* Whitelock, p. 106.

vested in the eldership or presbytery. In the assembly, as will be seen hereafter, all their measures were carried: but the parliament would not relinquish the authority they had seized from the bishops. Suspension from the sacrament and excommunication were claimed for the presbytery by the assembly: in the commons, Selden and Whitelock argued against the claim; and it was finally determined that suspension from the sacrament should only be allowed in certain cases specified in an ordinance. An appeal also was allowed from the eldership to the presbytery, thence to the assembly, and finally to the parliament. These proceedings "displeased some who wished to give arbitrary power to presbytery."* The presbyterians possessed no power, except what was delegated by the parliament, to be exercised under certain restrictions. The parliament intended to govern the church according to the presbyterian model, but not to yield the use of the spiritual sword to the presbyteries or assemblies. The mere form without the power was viewed by the presbyterians as no better than a shadow: the commons, however, proceeded in their own way. In March 1645-6, an ordinance was passed for the settlement of presbyterial government: it stated, that "the lords and commons, having removed prelacy, with the common prayer and all its unnecessary ceremonies, and established the directory, have begun to lay the foundation of a presbyterial government in every congregation, subordinate to classical, provincial, and national assemblies, and of all to the parliament." It enacts, that in every province a committee shall be chosen by parliament, to judge of scandalous offences not enumerated in any ordinance: the ministers to certify these offences to the committee, who are to declare the same to both houses, and the parliament to proceed to a final determination.† "The parliament apprehended that they had now established the fundamentals of presbyterian discipline, though it proved

* Whitelock, p. 165.

† Rushworth, vol. v. p. 585.

not to the satisfaction of any one party of Christians; so hard is it to make a good settlement when men dig up old foundations all at once.”* In answer to the complaints of the Scots, the parliament declared their object to be to settle religion according to the covenant: that they had settled presbyterian government, according to the advice of the assembly, without any material alteration: but that they could not grant unlimited power to near ten thousand judicatories. So far from viewing the withholding the power of the keys as no “material alteration,” the assembly viewed it as the ruin of their cause, and were as dissatisfied as the Scots. A petition was presented from the assembly, asserting the divine right of presbyterian government: it was submitted to a committee, who reported that, in consequence of the petitioners insisting so strongly on the *jus divinum*, “they had drawn up certain queries, which they desired the assembly might resolve for their satisfaction.”† The house rebuked the assembly, reminding them that they had exceeded their province, and that their existence depended on the authority of parliament.

The following were the principal questions submitted to the assembly: Whether parochial and congregational elderships appointed by parliament are *jure divino*, and whether any church government be so? And what the government is? Whether the classical, provincial, and national assemblies, all or any, are *jure divino*? Whether appeals from one to the other, and their respective powers on such appeals, are *jure divino*? Whether it is contrary to scripture for the supreme magistrate to determine what are scandalous offences? It was advised that the assembly should write their opinions and proof from scripture, and that they who dissented should set down their opinions, with the texts on which they were grounded.‡

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 295.

† Ibid. p. 299.

‡ Rushworth, vol. v. p. 607.

These questions were only intended to amuse the assembly until the parliament could arrange matters with the king. As the king was at this time with the Scots, the presbyterians were emboldened to several attempts to induce the parliament to consent to the full establishment of their platform. At their instigation, the lord mayor and common council presented a petition to the house, complaining of the swarms of sectaries in consequence of toleration, and reminding the parliament of the covenant. The independents presented a counter petition, thanking the parliament for their exertions in the cause of liberty. In reply to the former, the parliament stated, that, when the assembly had answered their questions they would proceed to a settlement of the church. The London ministers ventured to declare, that they would not comply with the parliamentary establishment, until it was freed from the yoke of the civil power: but the parliament issued an order, requiring them to execute the ordinance within the province of London. London was, therefore, divided according to the ordinance.

In other places the settlement of the new order was obstructed by the distractions of the times. During the next few years, a constant struggle was carried on between the presbyterians and the parliament relative to the authority of the civil power in ecclesiastical matters. Other causes, moreover, interfered to prevent the completion of the presbyterian system. The sectaries were rapidly increasing, and the army were bent upon a full toleration. The presbyterians possessed most of the churches; their form of worship was established; but they sighed after church power.* In 1647, a petition was presented to both houses, intimating that there were many towns and villages destitute of ministers; that there were individuals of competent gifts, who, through their scruples respecting ordination, were dis-

* They were "dissatisfied for want of the top-stone to their new building, which was church power."—NEAL, vol. iii. p. 364.

couraged from the work ; and, therefore, they desire that such persons, after being approved by judicious men, should be permitted to preach.* Offensive as were these sentiments to the presbyterians, the thanks of the house were given to the petitioners.

Towards the years 1647 and 1648, the independents had acquired so much strength, that the covenant, directory, and discipline, were evaded in many places in the interest of the army. Still, from the close of the war until the death of the king was the flourishing period of presbyterian ascendancy. In Scotland it enjoyed golden days, trampling on the mitre and the surplice ; but in England it never acquired full power. Soon after 1648, the covenant and the directory were neglected by many of the ministers ; and it could only be said that the new discipline was permitted. Whenever sectaries or independents obtained possession of a living, the new discipline was disregarded. The only places in which presbytery was generally established were London and Lancashire. In Lancashire, the congregational, classical, and provincial assemblies continued to meet till a late period ; though subsequent to 1648 their meetings were voluntary. In many places they were never established ; in others they dwindled away. Thus at first, after the abolition of episcopacy no discipline was established ; and, when a system was framed, it could not be enforced.

Thus the presbyterians never acquired that spiritual power after which they panted ; they were never freed from parliamentary control ; their idol was never set up in all its glory. The form established was that of the presbyterians ; but those who were inclined were able to treat it with contempt. The settlement made by the parliament was Erastian rather than presbyterian ; “ it was nearly Erastian in theory, and quite so in practice.”†

* Rushworth, vol. vi. p. 273.

† Hallam, vol. ii. p. 272.

CHAPTER XIX.

1643—1649.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY—THEIR VIEWS—REVIEW THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES—BECOME PRESBYTERIANS—DIRECTORY—CHURCH GOVERNMENT—SELDEN AND WHITELOCK—THE DISSENTING BRETHREN—GRAND ORDINANCE IN FAVOUR OF PRESBYTERIANS—PSALMODY—STERNHOLD—ROUS'S VERSION OF PSALMS.

THE origin of the Westminster Assembly has already been stated. Such an assemblage of individuals, sitting in deliberation on the state of the church, was an anomaly in the history of this country. As if it were intended to shew their dislike to the ceremonies, most of them appeared in the Geneva cloak, instead of the canonical habits; not that the clerical dress was in itself of any consequence, but as all the members, with the exception of the laymen, were ministers of the established church, whose liturgy and rites were not at their first assembling abolished, the neglect of it was an indication of that feeling of hostility to the church which soon became open and undisguised.

It is agreed by all parties, that up to the period of their meeting, the members, with a few exceptions, including the independents, were all conformists: not that all had conformed to every ceremony—for there was a wide diversity of practice among the puritans—but they had submitted to the liturgy and to episcopal government. They intended only to reduce episcopacy to the standard of the first or second age; but for the sake of the Scots alliance, they were prevailed upon to lay aside the name and function of bishop, and to attempt the establishing a presbyterian form, which at last they advanced into *jus divinum*.* Usher's reduction would have

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 139. In another place he states: "The state of the

satisfied them up to the period of the covenant. Baxter declares that all the members were conformists; but very soon from moderate churchmen they were converted into violent presbyterians. It is, however, evident, that notwithstanding their previous conformity, they did not view presbytery with any strong feelings of disapprobation, or they could never have made so sudden a transition from one to the other. The "Eikon Basilike," whether the production of Charles or not, may serve to throw some light on the conduct of the members of the assembly prior to the covenant: "For I cannot think so many men, cried up for learning and piety, who formerly allowed the liturgy and government of the church of England as to the main, would have so suddenly agreed quite to abolish both of them, if they had been left to the liberty of their own suffrages; and if the influence of contrary factions had not, by secret encroachments of hopes and fears, prevailed upon them to comply with so great and dangerous innovations, without any regard to their own former judgment and practice." Their avowed sentiments had hitherto been those of Hooker or Usher, not those of Bancroft or Laud.

The majority, however, soon became rigid presbyterians; but at their first meeting the parliament did not contemplate the rejection of the liturgy, though they had attacked the bishops. The assembly were first directed to revise the articles of the church, and to vindicate their doctrines; or, in other words, to render the articles and ceremonies more consonant to the views of the puritans. Their proceedings on the articles are thus stated by themselves in an advertisement prefixed to the articles, and delivered to the two houses: "The assembly at their first sitting received an

controversy was now changed; for, whereas before the entrance of the Scots the parliament insisted only on a reformation of the hierarchy, now they were obliged to attempt the total extirpation of it, and to establish another scheme in its room."—NEAL, vol. iii. p. 112.

order, July 5, 1643, requiring them to take into their consideration the ten first articles, to free and vindicate the doctrines of them from all aspersions and false interpretations. Afterwards they received another order for the next nine following; but being limited by the said order only to the clearing and vindicating them, though we found ourselves necessitated for that end to make some, yet we made fewer alterations than otherwise we should have thought fit, if the whole matter had been left to us, without any limitations, concerning many things yet remaining to be defective, and other expressions fit to be changed.”*

In the same advertisement, it is stated that they only revised fifteen of the articles, the house having ordered them, Oct. 12, 1643, to proceed to the subject of church government. The articles were presented to the parliament, in obedience to their own order, December 7, 1646. On the 29th April, 1647, it was ordered that six hundred copies of the assembly's confession, and six hundred copies of their proceedings on the thirty-nine articles, should be printed and presented to the members.

From this document two points are established beyond the possibility of contradiction; first, that they were originally employed to vindicate the doctrines of the thirty-nine articles; and, secondly, that as soon as the covenant was taken, they were ordered to quit the articles for the subject of church government. After this, the Confession of Faith, the Directory, and the presbyterian discipline, occupied the attention of the assembly. They proceeded at a more rapid rate in their opposition to the ancient system than the parliament; the latter, though laymen, were less violent against the settled institutions of the church than the former, though composed of grave and learned divines, who ought at least to have been distinguished for moderation. The clerical

* Advertisement prefixed to the Articles.

members of the assembly had received episcopal ordination, had been inducted to preferments, made the usual subscriptions, and conformed to the liturgy; yet almost suddenly they renounced their former opinions, and engaged to destroy that mode of church government which they were solemnly pledged to support.

That there must have been a sacrifice of principle in this ready adoption of the covenant, or a want of sincerity in their previous conformity, can scarcely be denied by the most strenuous defenders of the assembly. At all events, their conduct is liable to the charge of inconsistency. Even their advocates admit, that previous to the era of the covenant a few alterations would have satisfied their scruples. The articles of the church were not disputed, nor were her formularies, with a few exceptions, disapproved of. In the works of the puritans prior to the year 1640, are continual allusions to the articles and the liturgy. Not a few of them adopted the creed as the basis of their theological addresses; a practice exploded by modern dissenters, who, while they claim relationship to the early puritans, have deviated entirely from their principles. Neal asserts, that the assembly would have been satisfied with a modification of the articles but were prevented by the Scots. It appears, however, that they were as ready to receive as the Scots were to impose the covenant. Whatever, therefore, may have been the merits of the assembly, their sudden change deserves the severest reprobation. The aid of the Scots was required to enable the parliament to subdue the sovereign; but their change admits of no justification.

If presbytery was not set up in this country with the same authority as in Scotland, it was not owing to lack of zeal in the assembly, but rather to the refusal on the part of the parliament to relinquish the power they had wrested from the bishops. The assembly could not have manifested more bitterness against the ancient establishment, if, like the Scots,

they had from the outset been avowed presbyterians. The Scots had no reason to complain of their lukewarmness: there were frequent complaints of the apathy of the parliament; but the assembly were flattered by their thanks. Better allies than the assembly the Scots could not have desired.

They were, as already stated, confined in their deliberations to such points as were submitted to them by the parliament. They were as warm advocates for the divine right of presbytery as the Scots; but the parliament proceeded warily. No power was entrusted to the assembly; they gave their advice only.* “Many lords and commons were joined in commission with them, to see that they did not go beyond their commission: six or seven independents were joined with them, that all sides might be heard; of whom five were called the dissenting brethren (Nye, Goodwin, Burroughs, Sympson, and Bridge), who joined with the rest till they had drawn up a larger and shorter catechism.”†

The dissenting brethren soon evinced an indisposition to agree with the majority. In 1644, an attempt was made to reconcile the two parties: the independents demanded exemption from the jurisdiction of the classes, and a toleration for separate worship. This request was denied by the presbyterians, on the ground that a schism would be caused in the church. Thus the attempt failed.‡

Besides the independents, the Erastians were also the constant opponents of the presbyterians on the subject of church government. They asserted that no precise form was specified in the New Testament. To this party belonged

* “Among other parts of their trust, one was to approve of all that should be admitted into any church livings. They had no power to put out any, but only to judge of the fitness of such as were taken in.”—BAXTER, part i. p. 64.

† Baxter, part i. p. 73. Neal says that the “English divines would have been content with revising the thirty-nine articles, but the Scots insisted on a system of their own.”—See Neal, vol. iii. p. 378.

‡ Stillingfleet on Separation, p. 65 et seq.

Lightfoot, Selden, and Whitelock. They were men of ability, and puzzled the assembly with their arguments. These two parties kept the assembly in long debates about church government; and when it was settled by that body, they had acquired sufficient influence with the parliament to prevent its execution.

The first important business with which they were entrusted was that of ordination; and then they were commanded to devise a new method of conducting public worship. The liturgy had been abolished, and the church left without any rule; the directory was, therefore, framed by the assembly, sanctioned by parliament, and imposed on the clergy. In the preface, the evils attendant on the use of the common prayer, such as encouraging popery, and countenancing an idle and unprofitable ministry, are enumerated. Owing, however, to the disinclination of the people, as well as to the sectaries, who by this time had obtained many of the churches, its use never became general. It was, however, the only form set forth by authority, and continued until the death of the king, after which the ministers were left at liberty to observe or disregard it at pleasure.

Church government next occupied their attention, and at an early period, as is evident from the advertismment prefixed to the articles. Here they were opposed by the independents and Erastians. The latter had no objection to the presbyterian model, but only to the claim of divine right. Selden and Whitelock argued against the claim with all their powers of reasoning. Still the point was carried by a large majority, and rejected by the commons, who, to amuse the assembly, submitted to their notice the questions relative to the *jus divinum*, mentioned in the preceding chapter. The assembly voted that Jesus Christ, as king of his church, hath himself appointed a church government, distinct from the civil magistrate: the commons merely voted that such a form should exist in the church. But this decision was not arrived at till after

many debates, and the lapse of many months. The Erastians were men of eminent abilities, and found them abundance of work. Selden discovered both his wit and his talents: his learning, says Fuller, was employed "rather to pose than profit, perplex than inform the members; and he particularly opposed the *jure-divino*-ship of presbytery." Whitelock, who was present, and took an active part in the debates, says, that Selden "spoke admirably, and confuted divers of them in their own learning; and sometimes, when they had cited a text of scripture to prove their assertion, he would tell them, Perhaps, in your little pocket Bibles with gilt leaves (which they would often pull out), the translation may be thus; but the Greek or the Hebrew signifies thus or thus; and so would totally silence them."* Selden wittily remarks, "When the queries were sent to the assembly concerning the *jus divinum* of presbytery, their asking time to answer them was a satire upon themselves: for if it were to be seen in the text, they might quickly turn to the place and shew us it."†

These efforts of Selden, Whitelock, and the independents, were viewed with satisfaction by the parliament, who were by no means disposed to subject themselves to the Scottish hierarchy. The independents advocated unrestricted toleration: and much time was occupied in answering their arguments. Though only five in number, they proved formidable in power. "Contemptible as these five members might seem at first, like the little cloud like a man's hand, which appeared to Elijah's servant, they grew at last into a blackness which overspread the whole hemisphere of presbytery."‡ Had the presbyterians succeeded according to their wishes, every independent and sectary would have been removed from the ministry. Even the five dissenting brethren in the assembly would have been sequestered from their benefices,

* Memorials, p. 68.

† Seldeniana, p. 120.

‡ Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, p. 31.

and would have found less mercy from the assembly than from the bishops. The independents saw the persecuting spirit of the presbyterian hierarchy. The presbyterians had complained of episcopal tyranny; and now wished to tyrannise over others. "Those," says Fuller, "who desired most ease and liberty for their sides when bound with episcopacy, now girt their own garment the closest about the consciences of others."

In all these proceedings the Erastians and independents were conscious of having the support of parliament. The commons were alarmed at the lofty pretensions of the presbyterians, and therefore never granted them the power they claimed.

It appears that the year 1648 was the most flourishing period of presbytery; for, though an ordinance was issued in its favour in 1645, the intervening space was occupied in endeavours to get it enforced. In the year 1648, after repeated solicitations, the parliament passed what was termed the grand ordinance in favour of presbytery. It was designated, "A Form of Church Government to be used in the Churches of England and Ireland." It places every parish under the rule of congregational, classical, provincial, and national assemblies: but no penalties were imposed on those who refused to submit. This was "the utmost length that presbytery obtained in this kingdom."* But how soon was the fabric marred! even before the top stone was elevated to its situation, the foundation was giving way. As the ordinance was not enforced by penalties, it was little better than a permission of the new discipline.† In many churches the directory was disregarded: and the only places in which the new model was fully practised, were London and Lancashire.‡

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 501.

† Thus the government was Erastian rather than presbyterian.—*Comp. Hist.* vol. iii. p. 148.

‡ The first provincial assembly met in the convocation-house at St. Paul's,

Thus the presbyterians never acquired that spiritual ascendancy after which they panted; they were never freed from parliamentary control; and their idol was never set up in all its glory. Even the shadow of ecclesiastical authority conceded by the parliament, vanished before the genius of independency. Subsequent to the death of the king, the clergy neglected or observed the new system, according to their inclinations.

It is remarkable that the growing power of the independents operated as a constant check upon the encroachments of the presbyterians. In conjunction with the independents were the baptists and the various sects, who, though differing from each other in many particulars, were nevertheless united against presbytery, and in favour of toleration. The presbyterian model was alien to the feelings and habits of the English people, whose reverence for the institutions of their ancestors was undiminished.

The other labours of the assembly were few and unimportant. One subject was, however, submitted to their notice, of a singular kind: this was the state of parochial psalmody. At this time the version of Sternhold and Hopkins was the only one in use: it was the offspring of the puritans: yet such is the inconsistency of men, it now began to decline in favour with the presbyterians. Francis Rous, a member of the assembly, translated the psalms into metre: in 1645, complaints were uttered against the version of Sternhold and Hopkins, the chief of which was, that it was become obsolete. The assembly were authorised to take the matter into consideration: Barton's version was examined and approved, and ordered by the parliament to be printed.* It appears from Wood, that it had been printed in 1641: the

and was composed chiefly of the remains of the assembly. They continued to meet till 1655, when, finding that they had no power, their meetings were discontinued.—NEAL, vol. iii. p. 497.

* Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. ii. p. 232.

copies yet unsold were now circulated, or a new edition was published. It took the place of the ancient version, and was used extensively until the restoration. Wood states, that William Barton also composed a metrical version of the psalms, and that it was published by authority about the same time : but this is a mistake ; for Barton only published a few psalms and hymns on an occasion of public thanksgiving. These were indeed printed by order of the house. In 1651, Barton revised Rous's version, when it was again licensed for the press.*

This revised version is still used in the Scottish church. A comparison with Sternhold and Hopkins will shew that no great improvement, either in language or sentiment, was effected. It is curious to find the members of the assembly in 1646 complaining that the old version was become obsolete. The language of Rous's version is far inferior in dignity, simplicity, and clearness.

There are some curious facts relative to the version of Sternhold and Hopkins. In the time of Elizabeth and James it was the favourite of the puritans, and despised by some of the high churchmen. Indeed, an attachment to this version rendered a clergyman suspected of puritanism ; and many, to demonstrate that they were not puritans, expelled it from their churches.† This is one of the complaints of the puritans during that period. Its puritanic origin was known, which, together with its general use among the puritan clergy, rendered it distasteful to the episcopalians : but it is a remarkable fact, that, from the period of its being supplanted by the version of Rous, it became the favourite of the members

* January 1656, the matter was again debated in Cromwell's parliament. Burton mentions "a report from the ministers who were appointed to consider which version of psalms was fitted to be publicly used. Their return was, that Mr. Rous's version was best, both as agreeing with the original, and better metre."—BURTON'S Diary, vol. i. p. 229.

† It declined in favour with some of the churchmen of that day, just in proportion as it was held in esteem by the puritans.

of the English church. From the restoration till the version of Tate and Brady was set forth by authority, these psalms were alone sung in our churches. At the present moment the old version keeps its place in many a village church, where, notwithstanding the march of intellect, the introduction even of Tate and Brady would be viewed by the rustic choirs as an innovation of the greatest magnitude.

Thus it appears, that when the old version was slighted by the presbyterians, it became the favourite of the episcopalians. Though once cherished by the puritans, with whose brightest hopes it was entwined, it is treated with contempt by dissenters of the present day, who, ignorant of its puritanic origin, despise it chiefly because it is held in reverence by churchmen. This is another instance in which the dissenters have departed widely from the sentiments of the puritans; for with them this version was esteemed next to the Holy Scriptures: with them it was a manual of devotion; it was taught their children, and repeated in their families; it was quoted with the same feelings with which a favourite poet is quoted. From this version the sick and the dying repeated stanzas, for the purpose of reviving their hopes, and to strengthen them in the prospect of death and in grappling with the king of terrors. Many of the most celebrated puritans quitted time for eternity with passages from this version dropping from their quivering lips: they never imagined it destitute of devotional fervour; on the contrary, their best sympathies were awakened, and their religious feelings strengthened, by reciting passages previously treasured up in the memory. It was connected with their tenderest recollections; they had been familiar with it from childhood, and it was not forgotten while reason retained her sway. Even after the restoration, it was held in esteem by the nonconformists, as is evident from their lives. Dr. Edmund Staunton, one of the most eminent,

quoted the fifth verse of the thirty-first psalm when on his dying bed.*

After the death of the king, many members, though the assembly was not formally dissolved, retired. Those who remained were formed into a committee for the purpose of examining those who were presented to livings.† The dissolution of the long parliament, in 1653, was the signal for their separation, even as a committee.

CHAPTER XX.

1643—1648.

ASSOCIATED COUNTIES—SEQUESTRATIONS—CAMBRIDGE VISITED—EXCESSES
—SURRENDER OF OXFORD—DEPREDACTIONS ON THE BUILDINGS, &c.—
APPEARANCE OF OXFORD AT EVELYN'S VISIT 1654—SEVEN DIVINES SENT
BY PARLIAMENT—SOLDIERS DISPUTE IN SCHOOLS—SCRUPLE SHOP—
VISITATION OF UNIVERSITY—DEPRIVATIONS—FELLOWSHIPS FILLED—
CHARACTER OF THE NEW MEMBERS—DISTRESSES OF THE EJECTED FEL-
LOWS—FIFTHS.

BESIDES the general ordinances for the sequestration of the loyal clergy, there were also particular ones affecting certain places. The associated counties, as they were termed, and the university of Cambridge, were included in these particular ordinances. The counties thus designated were Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Hertford, Cambridge, Huntingdon, and Lincoln: being zealous in the cause of the parliament, to whose aid they contributed both men and money, they were placed under the government of the Earl of Manchester, who was authorised to eject scandalous ministers within their limits. Committees were nominated by the earl

* Clarke's Lives, p. 165.

† Comp. Hist. vol. iii. p. 152; Neal, vol. iii. p. 491.

according to the following form : “ By virtue of an ordinance bearing date January 22, 1643–4, I do authorise and appoint you to call before you all the ministers within the county, &c. that are scandalous in their lives, or disaffected to the parliament, or fomentors of this unnatural war, or that shall wilfully refuse obedience to the ordinances of parliament, or that have deserted their ordinary places of residence,—with full power to send for any witnesses, and to examine complaints upon oath ; and you are to certify the names of such ministers, with the charge and proof against them, to me.”

Copious instructions accompanied the warrant. The committees were ordered to be speedy in the execution of the ordinance, and to sit in general places, for the convenience and encouragement of informers ; not to permit the accused to be present at the taking of the depositions ; and to return the accusation and defence to the earl’s chaplains. The sixth instruction was, however, the most malicious : “ It being found, by sad experience, that parishioners were not forward to complain of their ministers, though very scandalous, too many being enemies to that blessed reformation so much desired, and loath to come under a powerful ministry ; and others sparing their ministers because they favoured them in their tithes, and were, therefore, esteemed quiet men ; therefore, they were required to call unto them some well-affected men within every hundred, who, having no private engagements, were to be encouraged to inquire after the doctrines, lives, and conversation of all ministers and schoolmasters, and to give information what could be deposed, and who could depose the same.”* Here was a direct bribe offered to all the ill-disposed in every parish to bring accusations against the clergy.

After a clergyman was sequestered, the parishioners were

* Walker’s *Sufferings of the Clergy*, p. 117 ; Neal, vol. iii. p. 129.

instructed to choose a fit and proper person to succeed him, who was to produce to the earl a testimonial from the well-affected gentry and ministry. He was then ordered to appear before the assembly at Westminster, for the trial of his abilities: if the assembly approved, the earl issued his warrant, appointing him to the vacant benefice, not, however, for life, but only during the earl's pleasure.

During the space of one year, 156 clergymen were ejected in five out of the seven counties: informations came in rapidly. When a minister was disposed to collect his tithe, a charge of malignancy was the almost certain consequence: if only four or five individuals were concerned in a petition, it was received and treated as coming from the whole parish. The charges were similar to those already noticed,—that of malignancy is of the most frequent occurrence; yet, though the conduct of most of the clergy was unimpeachable, they were designated, not only in the ordinance, but in the earl's warrant, "scandalous ministers." Neither piety nor learning was a shield to the clergy from the attacks of the committees.

The earl appears to have acted in a most arbitrary manner. He was at this time a staunch presbyterian, and evinced no ordinary degree of zeal in modelling the church to his own views. Sitting permanently under his sole direction, these committees became an insufferable burden on the country. The mode of procuring evidence was so contrary to justice, and so alien to the spirit of the constitution, that no one could escape, unless he was prepared to coincide with the parliament.

By the same ordinance, the earl was entrusted with the regulation of the university of Cambridge. From the commencement of the war, this university had been in the hands of the parliament. From an early period, the parliament had contemplated a reformation of the universities. Cambridge, being in the power of the parliament, experienced the weight of their vengeance earlier than Oxford, the latter

being a garrison of the king's until the end of the war. When the covenant was taken and episcopacy abolished, no other scheme was prepared for general reception. It was necessary, indeed, that a new system should be devised ; " but it was a considerable time before this could be perfected. In the mean while, they resolved to purge the university of Cambridge, which was the head quarters of their forces, that they might have a succession of clergymen training up in the principles they had espoused."* The town, says Neal, was in the interest of the parliament ; but the colleges were so many little garrisons for the king, and sanctuaries of disaffection. The ordinance is dated January 22, 1643-4 ; but the business of reformation was anticipated, in a great measure, by the army long before. In 1642, the lords ordered that no one should offer any violence to the chapels, libraries, or public schools ; nor plunder, purloin, or deface the books ; and that service should be performed as usual in the college chapels. About this time the colleges sent some of their plate to his majesty, upon which Cromwell entered the town with his troops, under the pretence of preventing its removal. From this time the university became a scene of perpetual ravages ; the clergy were insulted in the streets ; many were imprisoned for refusing to contribute towards the support of the war, their property, and even their books, being exposed to public sale ; and all the pictures that could be discovered were burnt in the market-place. The trees in many of the public walks were cut down and sold ; and the old court of St. John's converted into a prison, the furniture of the rooms being committed to the flames. Nor did the ornaments of the chapels escape destruction, nor the sanctuaries of the dead violation. " The committee enjoined the officers of the parish to put in execution the ordinance for destroying the

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 112.

relics of superstition, whereby the paintings in windows, and a great deal of carved work, was demolished.”* The chapel of King’s College was actually converted into a training-place for the troops ; but, fortunately, the magnificent windows were preserved, by being previously removed and concealed. The larger tablets on the floors of the chapels and cloisters were, however, broken up ; and all kinds of enormities were perpetrated before even the reforming ordinance was passed.

When Cromwell entered the town, he acted with great severity. Surrounding the chapels with his troops during the hour of prayers, he seized and carried away several of the principal persons in the university, who were kept in close confinement in London. On one occasion, the vice-chancellor and masters of colleges were detained in the public schools, where they had assembled for business, till midnight, at an inclement season of the year, and without fire or food, simply for declining to contribute to the support of the war.† Any individual, on his own responsibility, could enter churches, break the windows, and deface the monuments, with impunity. From the “ Querela Can-

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 113.

† Walker, p. 109. It is stated, that during Cromwell’s residence in the county, he threatened to demolish all the colleges. Happily, Cromwell’s enthusiasm evaporated as the war advanced. From whatever cause, he viewed Cambridge with especial favour ; and, owing to his forbearance, the university suffered less than Oxford. Some of the windows were spared at his intercession ; and, with the exception of public worship, the college chapels remained unaltered until the restoration. A few specimens of the manner in which ordinance against superstition was executed may here be given :—
“ 1643, December 21. We went to Peter House with officers and soldiers, and we pulled down two mighty angels with wings, and divers other angels ; the four evangelists, and Peter, with his keys, on the chapel door ; together with about one hundred cherubims, and many superstitious letters in gold. Moreover, we found six angels in the windows, all which we defaced.”
King’s College is thus noticed :—“ December 26, 1643. Steps to be taken down, and 1000 superstitious pictures, the ladder of Christ, and thieves to go upon many crosses, and Jesus writ upon them.” Of Queen’s, the

tabrigiensis," it appears that an individual, by virtue of a pretended commission, went about the country to break and deface monuments and painted windows. This man was joined by the rabble, who, with their leader, actually dug up the floors of some of the chapels.

It was stated in the ordinance, that "the service of the parliament being retarded, the people's souls starved by the idle, ill-affected, and scandalous clergy of the university of Cambridge, and that many who would give evidence were not able to incur the expense of a journey to London, the Earl of Manchester is authorised to appoint committees, who should call before them all provosts, masters, and fellows of colleges, all students and members of the university, that are scandalous in their lives, and ill-affected to the parliament."* He was also empowered to administer the covenant, remove the disaffected, and to supply their places with others, after the approval of the assembly of divines. Some of the members were ejected for non-residence, and others for malignancy. An oath of discovery was administered, by which all persons were bound to accuse their nearest friends: when the oath was refused, sequestration followed.† Neal doubts whether this oath was ever imposed; but as the author of the *Querela* positively asserts the fact, the matter cannot reasonably admit of doubt. The ground on which Neal rests his doubts, is the ignorance of the earl's chaplains, who stated that they did not remember it. Ashe, however, states, that he might be under mistake, through forgetfulness.‡

Cambridge had never been visited in such a manner

following:—"December 6, 1643. We beat down about 110 superstitious pictures, besides cherubim and engravings. And there none of the fellows would put on their hats all the while they were in the chapel. We dogged up the steps for three hours, and broke down ten or twelve apostles."—See CARTER's *History of Cambridge*, pp. 39, 168, 187.

* Husband's Collections, p. 415.

† *Querela Cantab.* p. 20.

‡ Neal, vol. iii. p. 116.

before: her most learned sons were dispossessed of their rights by the very men who had been loudest in their clamours for liberty. Upwards of five hundred members, including masters of colleges, fellows, exhibitioners, and undergraduates, were expelled before the year 1645. To adopt the language of the Querela, they "thrust out one of the eyes of this kingdom; made eloquence dumb, philosophy sottish; widowed the arts; drove the muses from their ancient habitations; plucked the reverend and orthodox professors out of the chairs, and silenced them in prison or their graves; changed the apostolical chair into a desk for blasphemy; tore the garland from the head of learning to place it on the dull brow of disloyal ignorance; made those ancient and beautiful chapels, the sweet remembrances and monuments of our forefathers' charity, and kind fomentors of their children's devotion, to become noxious heaps of dust and stones; and unhived those numerous swarms of labouring bees, which used to drop honey-dew over all this kingdom, to place in their room swarms of senseless drones."

The vacant masterships and fellowships were filled up with men of the earl's nomination. Neal attempts to repel the charge, that learning suffered through the expulsion of the members, by comparing the characters of the twelve ejected masters with those of their successors.* But he omits the comparison between the new fellows and those who were removed. Undoubtedly the earl placed the most eminent of his party in the vacant masterships; but the fellowships were occupied by men infinitely inferior to their predecessors. If, however, the new members had been equal to the old in learning and attainments, the iniquity of the proceeding would have been the same.

After 1645, the members were almost all in the interest

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 118, et seq.

of the parliament. In 1650, when the engagement superseded the covenant, many who had taken the latter were sequestered on refusing to subscribe the former. Between the year 1649, when the independent ascendancy became established, and 1650, the period of the engagement, some of the episcopal clergy had succeeded in possessing themselves of their former, or other fellowships. Some of them also took the engagement, by which they were only bound not to attempt any alteration in the government. By this oath the presbyterians were as much affected as the episcopalians.

When all hope of ultimate success was extinguished, Oxford was surrendered by his majesty's command to the army of the parliament. Accordingly, on the 24th of June, 1646, the city was entered by Fairfax, by whose influence the university was preserved from many excesses that, under a less influential or a more enthusiastic general, would have been perpetrated by the soldiers. The reader must not forget that, though at this time the parliament was composed chiefly of presbyterians, the army, who fought their battles, owing to the changes wrought by the self-denying ordinance, were principally independents and sectaries, whose hostility to all settled institutions was unbounded, and whose hatred towards any thing that, in their imagination, savoured of popery, was unbridled.

By the terms of the treaty, the ancient form of government was secured; the churches, colleges, and chapels, were to be preserved in their usual state: and, as far as possible, Fairfax caused these terms to be observed. It was, however, impossible to restrain the soldiers; and, notwithstanding the general's efforts to preserve them, few of the public buildings escaped uninjured. The admirers of ancient art have to deplore the loss of many monuments erected by our forefathers. Not a few of the painted windows were destroyed; statues were hurled from their pedestals or niches and

broken. As so much violence had been exhibited in other places, it was not to be expected that Oxford, the stronghold of the church, and the strongest royal garrison, should escape with impunity. It was rather to be expected that the vengeance of the soldiery, which had been inflicted in so many places, would fall with unusual severity on the fountain head of those supposed ecclesiastical enormities and impositions, from which, by the aid of the troops, the country had been emancipated.

Accordingly Oxford suffered severely. An adequate conception of the scene can scarcely be formed. So singular were the enthusiastic notions of the soldiers, that their actions savoured strongly of the ludicrous. While marching the High Street, they discharged their muskets at the statue of the Virgin over the entrance of the university church. Fairfax experienced no small difficulty in repressing their violence; for the very sight of an image was sufficient to excite them to acts of outrage. The clerical robes, with the badges of the various degrees conferred by the university, were exposed to the same violence as the other supposed relics of superstition; being termed badges of popery, and remnants of the great scarlet whore. The colleges had suffered severely during the war, some of them having been converted into barracks for the royal troops, and others into storehouses. Even during the king's residence, the cupidity of individuals had deprived the cloisters of New College of some of their brazen tablets. However, the work of destruction was chiefly completed after the surrender. Numerous traces of the violence to which the university was then subjected are every where visible. Indeed, with such enthusiastic feelings, it is surprising that any ancient monument or painted window was spared. A current cannot be checked; nor is it easy to oppose the ravages committed by enthusiasts. The preservation of some things must, therefore, be attributed to Fairfax. The windows at Christ Church were greatly

defaced ; nor did the churches in the neighbourhood escape. The churches of Dorchester and Banbury, the former seven, and the latter twenty-three, miles distant from Oxford, were very rich in painted windows, ancient sculpture, and sepulchral monuments : in the former church are sad evidences of the ravages of the army ; and in the latter were similar evidences a few years since, when the ancient church was taken down. Nearly all the windows and monuments were destroyed or mutilated in both these churches. All the ancient plate had been melted down for his majesty during the war.

It has been stated in a preceding page, that organs were specified in the ordinances against relics ; when, therefore, Oxford surrendered, the organs were either destroyed or silenced : the instruments, by which the ear was charmed, and the heart elevated in the moments of devotion, were rendered mute by a parliamentary order. Some were taken down ; and those that were permitted to remain were silent. When Evelyn visited Oxford in 1654, he found New College Chapel in its ancient state. It is probable that this beautiful structure was preserved by the influence of Fairfax. There are, however, still numerous traces of the ravages of the soldiers in the pavement of the chapels from which the brazen monuments were torn. The chapel of Magdalen College appears to have escaped with but partial injury. At the time of Evelyn's visit its appearance was unaltered, with the exception of the communion-table, which had been removed from its position in the east end of the chancel into the body of the building. The organ also remained in its original position, but its tones were never heard.

Not only were the university buildings exposed to the wild ravages of fanaticism, but Oxford became also the theatre of scenes unusually ridiculous, and the arena of a contest to which a parallel would in vain be sought in any period of her history. It could not be expected that Oxford

would undergo no change. The first measure of the parliament was a preparatory one: seven divines were selected and sent to Oxford, armed with authority to preach in any of the pulpits. They were to endeavour to bring the university to a better mind; that is, to prepare them for the approaching changes. It appears, however, that they were not heard with much attention: they omitted the Lord's prayer before sermon, and irritated rather than soothed their audience. Their labours were not followed by the results anticipated by the parliament: the views of the university were decided, and diametrically opposed to those of the presbyterians; and, moreover, the independents in the army opposed the preachers with as much zeal as the episcopalians. Oxford was really placed in the hands of the army, to whose principles the seven divines were opposed. Hence discord and confusion sprung up between the divines and the soldiers, who devoted themselves to spiritual employments with as much fervour as to military occupations.

The independents and sectaries were inimical to all settled institutions; they would not admit of an order of priesthood, but any individual, who pretended an inward call, was authorised to exercise the ministerial functions. On all these points, and many others, they were totally at variance with the presbyterians. As such were their views of the ministry, they could not hold the seats of learning in much estimation. The soldiers, therefore, hesitated not to enter the churches and public schools. In the former, they disputed against the presbyterian divines; in the latter, they challenged the scholars to prove their calling from Christ, and declaimed against human learning as totally useless. The few chaplains retained in the army since the new model, were now of a similar spirit; they also entered the university pulpit, and disputed with the presbyterian divines. Hugh Peters was one of these chaplains; and St. Mary's church was not

unfrequently a witness to his most extraordinary pulpit exhibitions. No adequate idea can be formed of the strange scenes so common at this period ; no minute record exists ; and all the information on the subject is scattered through the pages of comparatively a few writers. The soldiers encountered the gownsmen in the streets and the public walks : they mounted the scholastic rostrum to dispute with gowned scholars on the nature of the ministerial call, the office of the priesthood, and the peculiar doctrines of the various sects then so numerous in the army. It was maintained by the soldiers, that they ought not to lose any opportunity of promulgating their own views. In Oxford they must have considered themselves peculiarly favoured in being permitted to proclaim them in the chief fortress of the mother of abominations.

Shortly after the arrival of the presbyterian divines, they established a meeting for discussing cases of conscience, to which individuals were invited, in order to be relieved of their scruples. This was, in derision, denominated the "Scruple Shop." Their proceedings were soon disturbed by the independents. On one occasion they held a long dispute with Cheynel on the question, "Whether those who call themselves ministers, have more right to preach the gospel than any man who is a Christian?" The principal disputant on the part of the independents was Erbury : he had long been a chaplain in the army, and was well calculated to keep alive their enthusiasm. Both parties in this dispute were attended by their partisans ; but Erbury's were the more numerous. Many of the soldiers awaited the result of the disputation. Erbury disconcerted the presbyterians by asking them, Whence they had derived their orders? As all the seven had been episcopally ordained, they were puzzled in giving an answer : they were unwilling to venture an acknowledgment or a denial ; and in consequence of their silence, the victory was decided by the soldiers to be

on the side of Erbury.* The meeting for discussing cases of conscience was soon after dissolved.

Though the divines preached in the university, the members of colleges still retained their situations. "The university held out a siege of more than a year and a half; for the convocation-house proved a citadel, and each single college a fort, which they found it not very easy to reduce."† The storm, however, was gathering, and the horizon soon became dark; the thunder was heard in the distance, and eventually the seat of the muses experienced its violence. But for a considerable space the blow was warded off by the skill of the members of the university. The divines failed in their object, as is admitted by Neal; "there being no prospect of reforming the university by these methods, the houses resolved to proceed upon a visitation."‡ The visitors were appointed, May 1, 1647, by an ordinance, with authority to inquire into the lives and conduct of the members of the university; to examine on oath concerning the neglect of the covenant, directory, or discipline; and to ascertain who had been enemies to the parliament."§ It was ordered that the visitation should commence in the month of June; but the preacher appointed by the visitors for the occasion having detained them at St. Mary's longer than was anticipated, they were not able to reach the convocation-house by the time specified in their own citation. The vice-chancellor and his brethren attended at the appointed hour, but left the house as soon as the time had expired. The parties met in the court, the vice-chancellor merely wishing the visitors a good morning. This circumstance prevented the visitors from any further proceedings at this time.

In September another attempt was made. The visitors, armed with fresh powers, again summoned the vice-chancellor and heads of houses to appear before them. They

* Wood's Ant. lib. i. p. 369; Walker, p. 126. † Walker, 122.

‡ Neal, vol. iii. p. 431.

§ Rushworth, vol. vi. p. 114.

refused to own any visitor but the king. Several of the heads of houses were then summoned to London, to appear before a committee of parliament. The Oxonians persisting in their refusal to acknowledge the visitation, several months were occupied in these proceedings. At length, in the spring of 1648, the visitors published the deprivations of the refractory members.

But another difficulty presented itself. Though the visitors had published the deprivations of the vice-chancellor and other obnoxious members, they knew not how to dispossess them. They were not disposed to quit their posts at the nod of an unlawful authority: nor would the visitors have succeeded, had they not resorted to other means than proclamations and citations. The parliament appointed the Earl of Pembroke to the chancellorship, who proceeded to Oxford in April 1648, with a troop of one hundred horse. He was ordered to assist the visitors in the removal of all the refractory heads; and a file of soldiers executed the commands of the parliament. The day after his arrival he proceeded to Christ Church, to fix Mr. Reynolds in the deanery: Mrs. Fell refused to open the doors, when the earl commanded the soldiers to force them, and carry the lady into the quadrangle. Similar violence was practised at Magdalen, All Souls, Trinity, St. John's, Wadham, and other colleges.* Thus the doors were forced, and the newly appointed heads installed into their respective offices by a troop of soldiers.

Such powers had never been assumed by any English sovereign. The university had ever appointed their own officers; but now they were imposed at the point of the bayonet. The new vice-chancellor and heads of houses having been appointed, all the fellows were summoned to appear. The visitors proposed the covenant as a test; but

* Rushworth, vol. v. p. 378.

most of the fellows declined to attend the summons, or refused to submit to the authority of the visitation. They were, however, rejected, and others placed in their room. Finding that the fellows lingered in the university, the visitors ordered a sergeant, with a file of soldiers, to publish, by beat of drum, before the gates of every college, that if any of the expelled members remained in the university, they would be treated as prisoners.* As this order was disregarded, another was published, "that whoever should be taken within five miles of Oxford, would be deemed as spy, and punished with death." Armed with such extensive powers, and backed by a military force, the visitors succeeded in banishing from the university all who refused the covenant, and declined to submit to the authority of parliament. Nearly all the fellows and scholars were ejected: the number was upwards of five hundred, including the various degrees and the undergraduates.

Wood gives an amusing account of his appearance before the visitors. When the usual question was proposed, "Will you submit to the authority of parliament in this visitation?" he answered, "I do not understand the business, and therefore am not able to give a direct answer." Notwithstanding his equivocal reply, he was permitted, through some powerful influence, to continue in his post; where he remained until the restoration.

When the visitors had succeeded in ejecting the refractory members, they began to fill up the vacancies. Almost any one, whether a graduate or not, was appointed to a fellowship: many soldiers, whose services were no longer needed in the army, were metamorphosed into scholars. The university of Cambridge had become overstocked; and, like the ancient Greeks, she sent a colony to Oxford. "Many poor scholars flocked there: some of them soldiers, who were

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 458.

called 'seekers.' They had mortified countenances, puling voices, and their eyes, when in discourse, were lifted up."* Scholarship was no longer a recommendation, for, with many, learning and literature were held in contempt. However, by the exertions of a few distinguished men, who remained, during these times of confusion, as the guardians of the arts, the lamp of knowledge was kept from extinction.

By the end of the year Oxford was entirely changed : a new race had been introduced. But while the new members were enjoying the property to which they had no title, the legal owners were reduced to the greatest straits. In all the quarters of the parliament they were viewed as enemies : like the primitive Christians they roamed from place to place in quest of support ; they were compelled to seek shelter in secret places from the fury of an enthusiastic rabble, and the penalties of a despotic parliament. Their loyalty to a fallen prince was a crime of deepest die : the charge of popery was alleged, for the purpose of rendering them odious to the people. Some of them died in exile ; while others survived the restoration, and subsequently became eminent in the church.

The triumph of the presbyterians in Oxford was complete : the liturgy was superseded by the directory, and episcopacy by the new discipline. One of the preachers, from the pulpit of St. Mary's, called upon the visitors "to perfect the work of reformation, by destroying every thing belonging to Baal ; by destroying both the root and branch ; and by removing the very trunk of Dagon."† "The chapel clerks," says Wood, "had nothing to do after the common prayer was set aside."

Thus the universities and the parish churches were purified by the removal of all suspected individuals ; and their

* Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. ii. fasti 61.

† Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*, p. 138.

places were occupied by others, who were well-affected towards the parliament. By the terms of the ordinance for sequestering the clergy, the fifth part of the benefice was appointed to be paid by the new minister to the wife and children of the ejected incumbent. This ordinance is adduced by Calamy as an act of great clemency on the part of the parliament, and as being without a parallel in the transactions at the restoration. But these fifths were seldom or never paid; and to the families of the clergy they were a source of continual vexation. On the application of the wives and children they were rudely repulsed, and insult was often added to cruelty. Many of those ministers who refused to pay the fifths to the families of those whose vineyards they possessed, were sufferers in 1662: could they justly complain of hardship, when they recollected their own conduct? Some of the wives and children of the ejected incumbents were reduced to the necessity of taking up their abode in barns and stables: nor was it an unusual occurrence for the children to beg for bread at the doors of those houses in which their tender years had been cherished. Many of the Bartholomew sufferers had been prominent actors in this persecution of the families of their predecessors. If no such provision was made for the ejected ministers in 1662, they had no such claim: they, in many cases, possessed the property of others; and the instances of individual beneficence on the part of the episcopalians were greater, after the restoration, towards the ejected clergy, than any that can be produced in favour of the presbyterians towards the sequestered incumbents. Gunning allowed a considerable sum to Dr. Tuckney; and many other instances might be adduced; whereas Ley, one of the presbyterian clergy, actually wrote a treatise against the payment of the fifths: it is entitled, "General Reasons, grounded on equity, piety, charity, and justice, against the payment of a fifth part to the sequestered

ministers, wives, and children.”* Even Neal admits that the fifths were badly paid.† Some of the clergy actually sued for and recovered their fifths subsequent to the restoration.

CHAPTER XXI.

1648.

DEATH OF THE KING—HIS CHARACTER—CAUSES OF WAR—WHETHER PRESBYTERIANS OR INDEPENDENTS PUT THE KING TO DEATH—PULPIT AN EXCITING CAUSE OF WAR—SPECIMEN OF SERMONS.

THE unfavourable termination of the conference at Newport has been stated in a preceding chapter. When the army returned to London, the scale was turned in favour of the independents. Had the presbyterians united with the king, the monarchy would have been saved: but the favourable moment was lost by the protracted discussions in the Isle of Wight. The day after the expulsion of the presbyterian members, Cromwell came to Whitehall, and was honoured with the thanks of the remnant of the parliament. Petitions against the king were multiplied, and a committee was nominated to draw up a charge. His majesty was conducted to Windsor, and thence removed on the 19th January, 1648-9, to St. James's Palace. A high court of justice was erected, and the lords refusing to concur, the commons voted that their consent was unnecessary, and proceeded to bring the king to trial. The particulars of the trial do not fall within the scope of this work: sentence was passed upon the sovereign, and executed on the 30th January, 1648-9.

The character of Charles has been represented in various lights. That he partook of the common infirmities incident to

* Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. ii. p. 190.

† Neal, vol. iii. p. 136.

human nature, will be freely admitted : but to brand him with the odious name of tyrant, is the height of injustice : no man was less tyrannical in his nature ; and the acts alleged in proof of his tyranny were such as had been practised by all his predecessors. He had imbibed his father's lofty notions respecting the prerogative : they had been cherished in his earlier years, and he clung to them with tenacity. It is not easy to emancipate ourselves from the influence of early prejudices and associations : nor are principles imbibed in childhood easily rejected for others. No wanton attack, however, was made on the liberty of the subject ; nor was he cruel or unprincipled. It was his misfortune, not his crime, to have his lot cast in an age when the principles in which he had been educated were become unpalatable to his subjects.

Contemporary writers were evidently in error relative to the character of the king ; or their mental view was obscured by prejudice. Colonel Hutchinson says, "that the bishops flattered Charles, and he protected them in pomp and pride against all the godly people in the land." Such a sweeping assertion, from so conscientious a man, shews the strength of the prejudices then prevalent against the king.

In his last moments Charles displayed much greatness of mind : in private life, his character was unexceptionable. "Had the limitation of the prerogative been in his time fixed and certain, his integrity had made him regard as sacred the boundaries of the constitution." Mr. Orme, in his recent *Life of Baxter*, asserts that "the breaches made by Charles in the constitution—his arbitrary treatment of parliaments—his persevering attempts to render himself independent of their authority—were the causes of the war." In reply to this statement, it may be asked, did not the parliament, by refusing to be satisfied when all their reasonable claims were granted, force the sovereign to adopt means of self-defence ? Were not their acts more unconstitutional than the worst of the kings ? Was not the bill for per-

petuating the parliament tyrannical? Their obstinacy in insisting on the full establishment of presbytery was never equalled by any thing on the part of Charles; indeed, the bigotry and obstinacy of the presbyterians proved their ruin: "The presbyterians were more bigoted than Charles, who had been brought to a reluctant acquiescence in the toleration of presbytery."* "When we read the violent and barbarous proceedings of the parliament, is it consistent with honesty or humanity to hold up that assembly to admiration, while the faults on the king's side are studiously aggravated?"† "When," says the same able writer, "Hotham shut the gates of Hull—when the militia were called out—the bonds of our constitutional law were snapped asunder."‡ Until this reign, the idea of a free government was only found in the works, or existed in the imaginations, of speculative philosophers: the concessions, therefore, made by Charles at the assembling of the long parliament were in advance of the age, and ought to have proved satisfactory.

It is by no means easy to ascertain the real causes of the war; but it is certain that all the blame does not attach to Charles,—not all the sophistry nor all the eloquence of man could succeed in establishing such a proposition. "It has often been asked," says Dr. Lingard, "who were the authors of the civil war? The answer seems to depend on the solution of this other question,—were additional securities necessary for the preservation of the national rights? If they were, the blame will belong to Charles; if not, it will rest with his adversaries." After the concessions made by Charles before the war, can any one hesitate to acquiesce in the conclusion, that the rights of the people were properly secured?

There are some writers who affect to discover the causes of the war in the principles of the English church. The

* Edinburgh Review, No. 103.

† Hallam, vol. ii. p. 244.

‡ Hallam, vol. ii. p. 308.

injustice of such an assertion is most flagrant: the church had nothing to do with the war. The conduct of Laud was, indeed, arbitrary; but the principles of the church are unaffected by the practices of her prelates. Baxter denies that the presbyterians began the war; but he does not charge it upon the king: he appears to attribute it to the moderate churchmen in the parliament, who exclaimed against innovation and monopolies.* Baxter forgets to add, that all those men whom he designates conformists soon became rigid presbyterians; and if the influence of the Scots is considered in connexion with this fact, it will be difficult to shift the blame of the origin of the war from the presbyterians.

The question whether the presbyterians or the independents are chargeable with the guilt of the king's death, has also been fiercely agitated. It is clear that Cromwell, who, by his influence in the army, could turn its enthusiasm into whatever channel he pleased, with the independents, were the immediate cause of the murder of Charles; but the remote cause must be sought in the conduct of the presbyterians, who pertinaciously refused to comply with the concessions of the king until it was too late. The independents struck the fatal blow; but they were enabled to effect their purpose through the obstinacy of the presbyterians. The fetters with which the people were bound by Cromwell and the army, were forged by the intolerance of the presbyterians, who had it in their power to restore the sovereign and save the country. It is true, the presbyterians deprecated the act of cutting off the king's head, and used all their influence to prevent it,†—they were excluded from the commons, and the independents were supreme; but it

* Baxter, part iii. p. 41; Calamy, vol. i. p. 58.

† "It struck horror and confusion into that arrogant priesthood, who had begun to fancy themselves almost beyond the scope of criminal law."—HALLAM, vol. iii. p. 321.

is also certain, that those who originated the war were the actual cause of the sad tragedy of the 30th of January. But for the war, the independents and sectaries—the actual murderers of the king—would not have existed. Warburton describes the king's murderers as a party rising out of the ferment of the self-denying ordinance,—a swarm of armed enthusiasts, who outwitted the patriots, outprayed the puritans, and outfought the cavaliers. Still, some blame must belong to those who actually began the war, as well as to those who were the immediate instruments in the black act.

The majority in the parliament, who subsequently became presbyterians, hurried on the war; and one of the exciting causes were the sermons addressed from the pulpit to the people. Their passions were inflamed by the addresses of the men who ought to have appeared among them as the ministers of peace. In that day, the pulpit was made the vehicle for publishing the common news; and many of the common people knew little besides what was communicated to them by the clergy in their addresses. All public events were commented on by the preachers, and thus the people became excited. The practice was imported from Scotland: in that country, the preachers, even from the earliest period of the reformation, indulged in remarks from the pulpit on the measures of the government. During the troubles, they expatiated on all important matters with a freedom not exceeded by Knox himself. The practice soon became common in England, and almost every pulpit resounded with the cry of war. Butler alludes to this period:—

“ When gospel trumpeter, surrounded
With long-eared rout, to battle sounded,
And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist, instead of a stick.”

The “ drum ecclesiastic ” was used long before the war commenced, and was one of its exciting causes. The people

were excited to go "against the Amalekites, and to fight the Lord's battles."* One prayed, that "the king might be brought in chains of iron to his parliament." South states, that Axtell, one of the regicides, assured him, that he was induced to enter into the war by the sermons of the parliamentary clergy.† Calamy, Case, and others, exhorted the people to contribute towards the war as a just cause: the sound of war emanated from the pulpit; and after its commencement, the pulpit became the medium through which the people received authentic intelligence. When the covenant was taken, almost every pulpit was made the instrument for exciting the people: "Christ," says Marshal, "shed all his blood to save you from hell; venture all yours to set him upon this throne." The church of England was denounced as Babylon, and her altars were to be overturned as altars of Baäl.

On the fast and thanksgiving days, the pulpits breathed nothing but war. The celebrated John Owen uttered the following words in a sermon before the parliament: "Where is the God of Marston Moor and the God of Naseby, is an acceptable expostulation in a gloomy day! Oh, what a catalogue of mercies hath this nation to plead in a time of trouble! God came from Naseby, and the Holy One from the west." In 1645, the following words were uttered in a sermon: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever; who remembered us at Naseby, for his mercy, &c.; who remembered us in Pembrokeshire, for his mercy, &c.; who remembered us at Leicester, for his mercy, &c.; who remembered us at Taunton, for his mercy, &c.; who remembered us at Bristol, for his mercy endureth for ever."‡ "In vain," said Mr. Herle, before the lords, "are the praises of God in your mouths, without a two-edged sword in your hands." The

* Coleman's Sermon to Commons; Grey, vol. i. p. 3.

† South's Sermons, vol. i. p. 513.

‡ Walker, part i. p. 18.

following bill was read in the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields during the time of service: "These are to desire you to take into your Christian consideration the grief and sorrow of one Mistress Beal of Westminster, whose son, Francis Beal, a poor worm and no man, is fallen away from grace, and serves the king in his wars; wherefore, she most humbly beseecheth the prayers of this congregation that he may return and be converted." Saltmarsh wrote a book, in which he advised that the king and the people should be kept from a sudden union, and that the war should be cherished under the pretence of popery.* Vicars, in his "Parliamentary Chronicle," thus stirs up the people to war against the king:—

"Sing praise, sing praise unto Jehovah high,
For he hath triumphed most gloriously
O'er all our foes: the horse and rider he
Hath tumbled down to deepest misery.
Yea all the rotten rout of Romanists,
Papists, and prelates, atheists, royalists,
And mad malignants, void of grace or sense,
To whom God now has made just recompence."†

Such were the methods resorted to by the presbyterian clergy at the commencement and during the progress of the war. Let every impartial person decide whether the sad catastrophe must not, at least, in part be attributed to the presbyterians. It is true the independents also used the pulpit for the same purpose, but the example was set by the presbyterians. Hugh Peters was employed to prepare the king's judges for the sad scene. He told them from the pulpit "to go on and prosper;" assuring them that the time was

* Whitelock, p. 68. Hugh Peters was accustomed to tell the soldiers, that heaven was full of red coats.

† Vines thus addressed the Deity before sermon in his Prayers:—"O Lord, thou hast never given us a victory this long while for all our frequent fasting. What dost thou mean, O Lord, to fling us into a ditch, and there to leave us?"—DUGDALE, p. 570.

arrived when the saints should “bind princes in chains, and nobles in fetters of iron,” and that this prophecy was to be fulfilled by them. Kneeling down in the pulpit, he begged them to do justice against Charles, and not suffer Benhadad to escape. In speaking of the fatal deed after its perpetration, the sectarian preachers used the language of scripture in the most profane manner, declaring that God had “made bare his holy arm,” and that he had “smitten kings in the day of his wrath.” Similar language was used during the period of the ascendancy of the independents. In a thanksgiving sermon at Bristol for Oliver’s victory at Worcester, Speed says, “we are this morning met to speak well of the name of the Most High God. If they ask us, where is our God? we can answer them with joy and boldness, that our God is the living God, who scattered them in his displeasure at Marston Moor; whose power brake them in pieces at Naseby field. Who smote their great ones in Kent; who, by a handful, put thousands to flight at St. Fuggons; whose strength made the weak strong to stain the glory of their pride at Dunbar; whose hand was never drawn back, but was stretched out still, until he had put the top-stone of our deliverance at Worcester.”

CHAPTER XXII.

1649—1653.

INDEPENDENTS TRIUMPHANT—THE PRINCE GOES TO SCOTLAND—TAKES THE COVENANT—CROMWELL MARCHES THITHER—KING ENTERS ENGLAND—BATTLE OF WORCESTER—CROMWELL DISSOLVES PARLIAMENT—STATE OF RELIGION SUBSEQUENT TO 1649—ENGAGEMENT—UNIVERSITIES—SOLDIERS AND MECHANICS ADMITTED TO CHURCHES—LIBERTY—ALL TESTS REMOVED—BAREBONE'S PARLIAMENT—ITS PROCEEDINGS—ENTHUSIASM—MARRIAGE—REGISTERS—REFLECTIONS—CROMWELL PROTECTOR.

THE presbyterians now saw the sad effects of their short-sighted policy in refusing the reasonable concessions of the king, until it was too late to retrace their steps. The independents were now left in undisturbed possession of the reins of government. With them were united all the sects who had sprung into existence during the war. "The independent party comprehended a countless brood of fanatical sectaries, nursed in the lap of presbyterianism, and fed with the stimulating aliment she furnished, till their intoxicated fancies could neither be restrained within the limits of her creed, nor those of her discipline."* After the operation of Colonel Pride's purge, the house of commons was composed of a small band of independents, baptists, and other sects, who were connected together by the contrivance of liberty of conscience. They never exceeded seventy or eighty in number. By this assembly monarchy was abolished, and the house of lords voted useless. As this remnant of the parliament was the creature of the army, so all the affairs of the nation were regulated by the military. To increase their numbers, they admitted those of the expelled members who were willing to concur in their recent proceedings, and

* Hallam, vol. ii. p. 270.

to pledge themselves to support the new order. Some of the excluded members submitted to the test ; but, according to Ludlow, the utmost care was taken to admit none whom it would have been dangerous to receive.

Whether Cromwell had already projected his subsequent advancement, it is not easy to determine. At all events he was prepared to seize every favourable opportunity to further his own aggrandisement. With the most consummate skill did he dissemble his real views, till he was enabled by circumstances to seize that power for himself, which had been wrested by the army from the parliament. The death of the king struck terror into the Scots ; but their rising in favour of the prince was speedily suppressed by Cromwell. The prince was invited over, and arrived in Scotland in 1650. In the case of the Scots, the hand of retributive justice was eminently displayed. Their claims had all been granted long before the commencement of the war ; but they were determined to impose their own system of church government on the English nation ; and, in consequence of the success of the army in England, they were doomed to witness the overthrow of their cause in Scotland. From 1640, until the arrival of Cromwell, presbytery flourished in that country in all its glory ; but now the meetings of the assembly were prohibited, and toleration was granted to all.

When Charles arrived, he was required to sign the covenant. In the declaration prepared for his signature, he desires to be deeply humbled for his father's adherence to evil councils, and for his mother's idolatry. A day of humiliation was appointed to atone for the opposition of his ancestors to the covenanted reformation. It is scarcely possible to decide whether Charles or the Scots were the more culpable in these transactions. While, however, we condemn the hypocrisy of Charles, we must equally detest the enthusiasm of the Scots in imposing such solemn declarations on a libertine youth. The coronation sermon was

preached by Douglass, and affords striking evidence of the boldness of the Scottish preachers in declaiming from the pulpit on the political state of the country. All public transactions were canvassed in the pulpit.

Cromwell's presence was necessary to crush this formidable opposition. No one was so well qualified for the task; for, in addition to his influence with the army, he brought with him an accession of glory from his conquests in Ireland during the preceding year. When Cromwell entered the country, the Scots were encamped near Edinburgh; the people fled as he advanced, and his troops were reduced to great straits from the want of provisions. So great indeed were his difficulties, that a retreat was rendered necessary. The Scots ventured on the pursuit, and soon experienced a total defeat at the battle of Dunbar. Notwithstanding these disasters, Charles resolved on entering England. In August 1652 they crossed the borders. Cromwell commenced a vigorous pursuit, and overtook the royal forces near Worcester; and on the third of September, the anniversary of the battle of Dunbar, Charles's army was again completely routed. The king escaped to the continent, and Scotland was completely subdued.

The parliament, however, were not free from unpleasant apprehensions. They perceived that the victories of Dunbar and Worcester had invested Cromwell, not only in the estimation of the army, but also of the public, with a reputation that might ultimately prove fatal to their own existence. A war with Holland was entered upon with the hope of lessening his credit by incurring expenses, that might render it necessary to disband the army in which his strength consisted. In this war, however, Oliver's reputation, so far from being tarnished in its lustre, was greatly enhanced. Both Cromwell and the parliament saw that one or other must fall; and the question was, which should strike the blow. Here, as in former instances, Cromwell's decision

proved fatal to the parliament. Hesitation would have ruined him : he saw his danger, and was prepared to avert it. Submission to the parliament would have been destruction to himself ; their subjugation, though attended with risk, was possible. The army alone had enabled the parliament to govern the country. His credit with the troops was unbounded. It is remarkable that the remains of the parliament, in order to deliver themselves from the army, should have resorted to the same means that in 1648 had led to the purgation of the house. The independents, as the presbyterians after the close of the war, contemplated the disbanding of the troops, and the same results ensued.

On the 20th April, 1653, having previously arranged his plans with the officers, Cromwell proceeded to the house, and told them that he was determined to put an end to their authority. The stroke was a bold one. Thus was the long parliament completely dissolved, after having sat during the space of twelve years. " Thus it pleased God that this assembly, famous through the world for its undertakings, actions, and successes, having subdued all their enemies, were themselves overthrown and ruined by their own servants ; and those whom they had raised now pulled down their masters."*

Cromwell was supported by the officers, who complimented him on the justice of the act. Some of the ministers also presented addresses of thanks : one was entitled, " The humble petition of the churches of Christ," &c. It commences thus : " Sheweth, that after many prayers, seeing now a glorious return of that we have prayed for acted so sweetly by you, we cannot but render this humble acknowledgment of God's goodness to us and the rest of God's people." They add : " We are very sensible that we could not expect upright judgment from the late parliament

* Whitelock, p. 529.

in the way they acted; and are strongly persuaded to believe that it must be another congregation, that must first be received by God, that is to be established before the work of the Lord be done, which we hope is now bringing forth by you." They then add: "Our petition to your excellency is, first, that you, whom we look upon as our Moses leading God's people, would be pleased, as always you have been, still to be for the people to God-ward, that you may bring the causes unto God (Exodus, xviii. 19), and advance the sceptre of our Lord Jesus; secondly, that you will remove the grievances of law-suits, and teach us ordinances and laws; thirdly, that ye will not leave the choice of those that shall govern us to the liberties of the counties, but that your excellency will be pleased yourself to provide conservators for us out of all the people."*

With respect to ecclesiastical affairs, no regular system of church government or discipline existed after the death of the king. The ordinances relative to presbytery were of no avail: the covenant was disregarded, or only voluntarily taken; and the engagement to be faithful to the present government, without king or house of peers, was substituted in its room. No minister could be inducted to a living without subscribing it: its operation was experienced as well by presbyterians as by episcopalians. The engagement, however, was less offensive than the covenant; it merely bound those who subscribed it not to attempt the subversion of the government: while the covenant engaged them to extirpate episcopacy. Many were expelled in the universities by this new test: Reynolds was removed from the deanery of Christ Church, and Owen was appointed to the vacant post.

The form of presbyterian government was, however, permitted to remain. In 1649 the commons declared that the

* Parliamentary History, vol. xx. p. 144.

presbyterial government should be the established government;* but toleration was extended to all parties. The engagement was subscribed by some of the episcopal clergy, who thereby gained admission into the churches, and refused by others. In the universities it was universally imposed. Sancroft was one who lost his fellowship in Cambridge in consequence of his refusal to take the new test: from some cause or other he had avoided the operation of the covenant, and retained his post until the period of the engagement. The state of the university of Cambridge subsequent to the ascendancy of the presbyterians, may be gathered from several incidental notices in Sancroft's Life.† In 1652 one of his pupils writes from St. John's College, in allusion to Cromwell's victory over the Dutch, "Mr. Peters said the business was so long doubtful, that God was brought to his hums and hawes which way he should fling the victory. After so long a banishment, the common prayer last Thursday at night entered into Trinity Chapel, and once more consecrated it. Dr. Comber had leave to be buried in his own vineyard; and though he might not live upon his own ground, he may sleep and rest there." In another letter, dated 1653, the writer observes, "Mr. Peters preached here on Sunday, and in the general cheated the company and expectation with a sober honest sermon: only he was not so severe as to forget what many came for, but satisfied them sometimes in words, sometimes in actions." Sancroft, writing to his father during the same year, speaks thus of the state of learning: "It would grieve you to hear of our public examinations; the Hebrew and Greek learning being out of fashion every where." It appears from these extracts, that Peters sometimes exhibited in the university pulpit: but, unflattering as were the prospects of the university, they were not so dark as under the presbyterians. Even the liturgy was read,

* Neal, vol. iv. p. 15.

† D'Oyley's Life of Sancroft.

which under the covenant would have been impossible. Oxford was in a similar state. Cheynel, one of the most violent presbyterians, was ejected on refusing the engagement; and Pococke was removed from his professorship, though he was permitted to retain his living in the country. From this incident it appears that the engagement was not pressed in country places. Many of the clergy now recovered their livings, or were admitted to others, and remained in the expectation of better times: more freedom was enjoyed than under the domination of presbytery; and the liturgy, though not authorised, was used in many of the churches, at least occasionally.

The composition of the committees for ejecting the clergy, underwent some alterations subsequent to the year 1648, by the removal of some of the presbyterians, and the addition of a few independents and sectaries. Upon the whole, indeed, the situation of the clergy was improved: for, while presbytery would admit of no deviation from the established order, independency rested on the basis of a universal toleration to all who agreed in fundamentals. Such views were reprobated by the presbyterians, as incompatible with the existence of true religion. But though the principles of toleration were thus openly avowed, the full benefit was not extended to the episcopal church. The clergy were at liberty to pursue their own course in conducting public worship; but the common prayer was still suppressed: nothing was imposed; on the contrary, all were at liberty to follow their own inclinations. Unordained persons were even admitted into benefices: the old presbyterians had received episcopal ordination, and the new ministers had been ordained according to the new discipline; but now ordination was unnecessary. Many who occupied the parochial churches were destitute of the common rudiments of education; and many had been employed in the common drudgery of life until they entered upon their new sphere. Any one was at liberty to exercise the

ministerial function : thus soldiers, tradesmen, and labourers, became parochial ministers. Some were baptists, or members of the other numerous sects of those times. The episcopalians modelled the service after the liturgy : some of them read the 20th chapter of Exodus instead of the communion service ; chose the lessons appointed by the calendar ; and threw the collects into one continued form. Bull, Sanderson, and others, constantly adopted this practice.*

Some of the presbyterian clergy incurred the displeasure of the ruling authorities, by declining to observe the fasts appointed by the parliament. In 1650 a fast was appointed, and Jenkins, a presbyterian minister, was, on refusing to observe it, sequestered from his living, and banished thirty miles from London.

The removal of every religious test during these times, opened the door for the entrance of men of all creeds into the churches : the ministers preached their own peculiar doctrines : on some occasions the congregation was favoured with a sermon from a soldier in his military garb, or from a tradesman of their own neighbourhood. These individuals were found in the ranks or in the shop during the week, and in the pulpit on the Sunday. To have attempted to prevent such irregularities, would have incurred the heavy charge of hindering the progress of the gospel.

In the dispute between the church of England and the presbyterians, it was constantly asked by the latter, Where was the scripture authority for the various matters at issue between the two parties ? The presbyterians demanded scripture authority for kneeling at the sacrament, wearing a surplice, a prescribed liturgy, and the observance of holy days : the independents now used the same weapon against the presbyterians, and asked, Where are your lay-presbyters and your classes to be found in scripture ?

* Bull's Life, p. 39. -

After the dissolution of the parliament, all power was vested in Cromwell and his officers: the act was applauded by the episcopalians and presbyterians, both of whom were disgusted with the wild scenes that had lately been witnessed: both parties also wished to restore the king; but Cromwell was determined to act for himself. It was necessary that the supreme power of the state should be lodged somewhere; it was therefore determined to vest all power in 144 persons, to be selected under the direction of Cromwell. The persons chosen for this purpose were generally men devoid of education: he seems to have been convinced that an assembly of men of talent might have defeated his purposes of aggrandisement. They met, according to appointment, July 4, 1653, when an instrument, signed by himself and the officers, was presented, by which they were invested with the authority of the state. This singular assembly assumed the ancient name of parliament; in history it is known by the appellation, "Barebone's Parliament," from the circumstance of the individual of that name being one of its leading members.

Their session continued five months; and their debates and motions afford a curious picture of the times. On the day of their meeting they began to assemble at eight o'clock in the morning. "They began with seeking God by prayer; and the Lord did so draw forth the hearts of them, that they did not find any necessity to call for the help of a minister, but performed the service among themselves, eight or ten speaking in prayer to God, and some briefly from the word. That much of the presence of Christ and his spirit appeared at that time, to the great gladdening of the hearts of many: some affirming they never enjoyed so much of the spirit and presence of Christ in any of the meetings and exercises of religion in all their lives as they did that day."* On the 11th of July it is stated that the day

* Several Proceedings of Parliament, &c.—*Parl. Hist.* vol. xx. p. 181.

was spent in seeking the Lord ; when twelve of the members prayed and spoke till four in the afternoon : the Lord General was present, and it was a comfortable day. As they had no occasion for a chaplain, they began with prayer when a few members were assembled, and continued praying in succession until a sufficient number were assembled to constitute a house.*

Besides the matters connected with religion, their attention was directed to the state of the law. On the 5th of August the house resolved that the court of chancery be taken away ; and a bill for that purpose was ordered to be brought in by the committee of the law. On the 19th of August the parliament took into consideration the state of the laws of the nation in general ; and resolved that a committee be appointed to consider of a new body of the law.† Of so much importance in the estimation of the members was this subject, that every Friday was set apart for this business alone. In the debate, as related by one of the members, it is stated that some of the reasons in favour of the new model, “ were the intricacy, uncertainty, and incongruity in many things with the word of God and right reason in the laws as they now are.” The vote for a new body of the law was carried, and a committee chosen for that purpose : had they not been prevented by their dissolution, the work would probably have been accomplished. Many debates took place, and the law of God was consulted on all occasions. Had they succeeded in their object, the laws would have been brought within a narrow compass : “ by which means,” says the writer previously quoted, “ the huge volumes of the law would come to be reduced into the bigness of a pocket-book.”‡ Neal censures Eachard for stating that the parliament contemplated the removal of the old laws, as

* Parl. Hist. vol. xx. p. 183.

† Ibid. p. 213.

‡ An Exact Relation of the Proceedings of the Parliament. By a Member. Printed 1654. P. 15.

badges of the Norman conquest, and substituting the Mosaic laws of government in their place.* “No such proposals,” says he, “were made to the house.” From the above statements, derived from the most authentic sources, it will be seen that such proposals were actually made; nor can it be doubted, that Eachard’s assertion was founded on the best authority. In the debate on the subject, the law of Moses was certainly followed: that the matter was not accomplished, is owing to the dissolution of the assembly.†

But the most remarkable proceeding of this assembly was the act relative to marriage. The nuptial ceremony was no longer to be celebrated by the parochial ministers, nor even in the parish churches, but before the civil magistrate. The act was passed August 24th, 1653: it enacts “that all intending to be married should deliver in writing to the register the names of the parties; that the register should make publication of the intention of the parties on three several Lord’s-days, at the close of the morning exercise, in the church or chapel; or, if the parties desire, in the market-place next adjoining, on three market-days, between the hours of eleven and two; that the proclamation should be attested by the register before marriage.” It then proceeds to enact, “that all persons intending to be married should come before some justice of the peace of the same county, city, or town, where publication hath been made,

* Neal, vol. iv. p. 70.

† They attempted the abolition of the regular ministry altogether: “at length it was put to the vote, whether all the parish ministers should be put down or no? and it was but accidentally carried in the negative by two voices. And it was taken for granted that tithes and universities would next be voted down.”—CALAMY, vol. i. p. 68; BAXTER, part i. p. 70. Baxter adds, “The independents thought that the parishes were no true churches, and the anabaptists, that those baptised only in their infancy were no Christians; and so that they might have true churches and Christians, many independents secretly, and the anabaptists openly, promoted the ejection of all the parish ministers in England at one vote, that so they might set up the best of them again in another way.”—Part ii. p. 180.

and bring a certificate thereof, with proof of consent of parents or guardians." If no objection was made, the marriage was permitted to proceed. "The man, taking the woman by the hand, pronounced the words:—I, A. B., do here, in the presence of God, the searcher of all hearts, take thee, C. D., for my wedded wife; and do also, in the presence of God and before these witnesses, promise to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband:" the same words were repeated by the woman, with the addition of, "an obedient wife." The parties were then declared by the justice to be husband and wife. It was also added in the act: "And no other marriage whatsoever within the commonwealth of England, after the 29th September, 1653, shall be held or accounted a marriage according to the laws of England."*

To secure a record of marriages, births, and burials, the inhabitant householders of every parish were authorised to elect some able and honest person to be the parish register, who was to continue in office three years. This choice was also to be approved by one justice of the peace of the county. It was ordered that a book of vellum or parchment should be provided, for the registering of all such marriages, as well as births and deaths, to be in the custody of the register. The notices of such elections to the office of register were usually entered in the book, and are still extant in some parochial registers. The following is extracted from a village register:—"John Green, in the parish of A, in the county of N, was, according to the Act of parliament in that case provided, chosen by the major part of the parishioners of A aforesaid, to be parish register; who, according to the laws, took his corporal oath for the due performance of the said office the 4th day of February, in the year of our lord 1653. Before me, W. W., justice of the peace."

* Scobell. Parl. Hist. vol. xx. p. 216.

This act was evidently framed for the express purpose of degrading the clergy, to whom, amid all the previous changes, whether episcopal or presbyterian, the celebration of the marriage rite had been entrusted, and who had ever been regarded as the fittest instruments on such a solemn occasion. It was no longer a religious ceremony; nor could any more successful method have been adopted for introducing licentiousness of manners among the people, and loose and uncertain views on a subject in which the tenderest sympathies were bound up. That the change was offensive to the people, is evident from contemporary writers. "The new way of marrying so frightened the people, that to enjoy the benefits of the old way before the time of the act, multitudes ran headlong into the noose: it was seen, by the number of bridal garters in hats in every part of the town."* It must have been a considerable period before a modest young woman could have consented to the publication of the banns in the market-place; yet instances occur in many registers. The state of morals may be estimated by the practices of the common people relative to the celebration of marriage: a recent act, by the terms of which the names of the parties were ordered to be affixed to the church door, was received with repugnance; nor did a second session of parliament elapse before the obnoxious act was repealed. It is easy to infer, from this circumstance, what must have been the moral degradation of the common people, when many could choose to have the banns of their marriage three times proclaimed in the public market-place.

Hitherto, the parochial ministers, whatever were their peculiar views, were called to preside on the solemnisation of marriage. When the common prayer was set aside, the rite was performed according to the directory: it was reserved for Barebone's parliament to effect a change so opposite to the views and best feelings of the people.

* Baker's Chronicle, p. 673.

In the various parish registers at present in existence, the entries of marriages, while they differ, in some particulars, in different books, are altogether different from those antecedent to the year 1653. It was not specified in the act, whether the book into which marriages were to be entered should be the old parochial register, or whether a new one should be provided. After an examination, however, of many registers in different and distant parts of the country, the writer is able to state, that in every case the entries are made in the old books. The mode of entry is changed in 1653; down to that period, the marriages are entered in the usual form; from this time they are entered according to the new act. No two registries agree exactly as to the forms; but, as to substance, there is a strict agreement among them all. A few extracts from different registers will throw some light on a subject of considerable interest.

In some books, it is stated that marriages were published, without specifying where or by whom they were celebrated: in others, it is recorded that "A and B were married by Justice E." Banns are altogether unnoticed in some registers; while, in others, both the banns and the marriage are duly entered. Not only do different books present a considerable variety in their entries, but even in the same book the same variety is observable. The following are extracted from the register of a parish in Somersetshire:—"The intention of marriage between A and B, both of this parish, was published three several days, according to act of parliament. The days were January 7, 14, and 21." Below this entry it is added, "A and B were married before C D, agent for the justice of the peace of this county." Others follow in a similar form, except that the marriages were celebrated by the justice in person. To other entries in the same book is attached the name of the public register, under the notice of publication of banns; and that of the justice, under the memorial of marriage. In the same book, also, are many entries to the

following effect:—"Banns of marriage between, &c. were published in the market-place of W. three several market days in three several weeks without contradiction: witness my hand, C D, justice of the peace." In this manner, with some slight variations, all the marriages are entered from 1653 till 1659, when the ancient mode was restored.

In another parish in one of the midland counties, some of the marriages are stated to have been celebrated before Justice D, or Justice E, and others before the mayor, in the following form:—"A and B were married before me, after publication of banns in the market-place (and sometimes in the parish church): John B., mayor." In this book there is a variation from the usual practice, which the author has not discovered in any other parish to which his researches have been directed; the name of the minister of the parish is associated in the entry with that of the mayor: "A and B were married before E. T. mayor, and G. H. minister." Now, the act does not permit the interference of the minister, nor was he authorised to take any part in the ceremony. In no other register examined by the writer is there any allusion to the minister. The presence of the minister in these instances is a singular circumstance: his presence was not necessary to render the marriage valid. Whether, therefore, he was permitted to perform the ceremony with the connivance of the mayor, or was present to give it the appearance of a religious rite, are points that cannot be ascertained.*

It is observable, that the old mode of registration in the case of births was departed from, under the operation of this

* A passage in Baxter, and another in Calamy, may, perhaps, reflect some light on this curious subject. The former says: "This conventicle made an act, that magistrates should marry people instead of ministers (yet not prohibiting ministers to do their part)." The latter, in a note, observes: "Thus says Mr. Tallents, of Shrewsbury, in a letter to me: I and others have married many before a justice, he saying nothing, but only declaring the marriage was valid." See Baxter, part i. p. 78; Calamy, vol. i. p. 67.

act. The baptism was not registered as at present, and as was the case before the present act, but the birth. Many of the sectaries were anabaptists, of various shades of opinion; and this plan was adopted, in order that they, also, might be comprehended within the act. This act was confirmed by Cromwell's parliament in 1646, except the clause by which no other marriage was rendered valid: it remained in force until the restoration of the long parliament, when the marriage rite was celebrated according to the presbyterian method. Many persons, however, risked the legality of their marriage, rather than submit to a form which they detested. Some were married by the sequestered clergy according to the liturgy. Speaking of the marriage of Bishop Bull, Nelson observes: "They were joined together in holy matrimony by Mr. William Master, vicar of Preston, according to the form prescribed in the book of common prayer, the use of which was then forbidden under a great penalty. But Mr. Bull had a particular regard to our ancient liturgy in those times, when it was the fashion to despise it: so he had not a less esteem for the constitution of the church; for, in order to render so serious an action as matrimony is still more solemn, he pitched upon Ascension-day for the solemnising of it, which, in 1658, was the 20th of May."*

It is somewhat remarkable that any of the parochial registers of these times should have been preserved; yet there are numerous books in the parishes of England, in which all the marriages of those times are duly entered.

After a session of five months, becoming, as was anticipated by Cromwell, weary of their charge, they resigned their authority into the hands of those from whom they had received it. The council of officers soon declared Oliver Cromwell protector of the three kingdoms, with the assistance

* Nelson's Life of Bull, p. 45.

of a council of twenty-one persons. An instrument of government was framed, by which it was decreed that a parliament should assemble every three years: that such bills as should be offered to the protector, should, if not confirmed in twenty days, be laws without his concurrence; and that, during the intervals of parliament, the protector and his council might issue declarations, which should have the force of laws. Cromwell subscribed the instrument, and was proclaimed protector in December 1653.

Thus did Oliver Cromwell become invested with greater authority than had ever been exercised by the ancient sovereigns: he acted with unusual vigour, and the country flourished under his sway; but his elevation was offensive to the republicans, with whom he had formerly acted. His name was revered at home and feared abroad: he conducted the English armies to victory and to fame; and Victory sat at the helm of his fleets. The multitude were dazzled by the actions of a man, who caused the English name to be dreaded, as well as honoured, among all the states of Europe. The crowned heads of the continent did homage to his superior genius; manifesting as much readiness to treat with him as they could have done had he been descended from an illustrious line of kings.

According to the instrument of government, a parliament was to meet September 3d, 1654. Writs were issued in Cromwell's name. Many boroughs were excluded from returning members; and the counties were represented by one or more, in proportion to their size. He opened his parliament on the appointed day with a lengthened speech. Lenthall was chosen speaker; and they proceeded to their work. They began to question the authority by which they were assembled; and Cromwell, after administering a severe reprimand, dissolved them on January 22d, 1654-5.

At this time, Oliver was detested by the presbyterians, for trampling on the covenant and murdering the king; and

by the independents, for destroying the commonwealth. Still, he contrived to manage the various parties into which the state was divided: it is, indeed, partly owing to these divisions that he was enabled to retain his authority; had the different parties united their scattered strength, the opposition would have been too formidable even for the genius of Cromwell to have overcome. In 1656, a new parliament was assembled; but none were permitted to take their seats until they had signed an engagement to be faithful to his government. An offer of the crown was made him by this parliament: the offer was declined. He probably saw much odium would be incurred, and that the safety of his government might be endangered; but though he declined to accept of the crown, he submitted to a solemn inauguration. By this parliament, he was also empowered to name his successor: an upper house was created, whose members were invested with many of the privileges of the ancient peers. Both houses met in January 1657-8. The upper house was at first attacked by the lower, but eventually recognised: proving refractory, he dissolved them in February of the same year. This was his last parliament, as his career was soon after closed by the hand of death.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1653—1657.

STATE OF RELIGION DURING THE COMMONWEALTH AND PROTECTORATE—
 WALES—ALL THE CLERGY REMOVED—ITINERANTS—ENTHUSIASM—
 NUMBERS EJECTED IN WALES—CROMWELL TOLERATES ALL THE SECTS—
 TRIERS—ORDINANCE FOR REMOVING SCANDALOUS MINISTERS—CASE OF
 POCOCKE.

WE shall now proceed to delineate more particularly the ecclesiastical affairs of the country under the commonwealth and the protectorate. Subsequent to 1649, the penal laws, by which the covenant was enforced, were disregarded. The same exterior was preserved in religious worship; but the spirit of presbytery was subdued. No particular mode of church government was established, or, rather, no form was enforced by pains and penalties. The majority of the parochial clergy were presbyterians, for the episcopalians had been ejected by the parliamentary ordinances; but, since the turn of affairs in favour of the independents, many of the churches were occupied by baptists and sectaries; some of the ancient clergy were also restored to their preferments under the commonwealth, when the penal laws were abolished. The episcopal clergy were, indeed, in a more favourable situation now than under the reign of presbytery and the covenant. The religious proceedings have been detailed until the year 1653; we shall now enter on those subsequent to that period.

One of the first measures of the parliament, after the death of the king, was the purgation of the Welsh churches. Amid the convulsions by which the English church was rent during the war, a comparative calm had been enjoyed by the clergy in Wales: they had escaped sequestration, while their

brethren in England were drinking deeply of the bitter cup of sorrow. Hugh Peters recommended the sequestration of the whole body of the Welch clergy, and that their revenues should be deposited in a public treasury, from which a few itinerant ministers should receive an annual income of one hundred pounds. Wild as was this scheme, it was actually carried into execution; and a small number of itinerants were appointed to attend to the spiritual wants of the principality. The clergy were sequestered, and the produce of their livings was held by the parliamentary commissioners. It was enacted, that the tithes formerly paid to the clergy should be deposited in the common stock.

A similar plan had been recommended by Peters for England as early as the year 1647. In a tract, entitled "A Word of Advice to the Army," &c., he advises that two or three itinerant ministers should be sent by the state into each county.* In 1652, Lilly and Culpepper, the Francis Moores of the day, predicted the entire downfall of the settled ministry. These facts afford a singular picture of the state of the public mind at that period.

The first act on the subject was passed February 22, 1649, immediately after the death of the king, and is entitled "An Act for the better Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales, and for ejecting Scandalous Ministers and Schoolmasters."† It was confirmed at different times by the parliament; and under its operation almost all the clergy were removed. Neal attempts a vindication of the act from the character of the clergy: "The inhabitants of Wales were destitute of the means of Christian knowledge; their clergy were ignorant and idle; so that they had hardly a sermon from one quarter of a year to another.‡ This statement is very remote from the truth: it is made more in the spirit of an advocate, who labours in a bad cause, than of the faithful

* Grey's *Hudibras*, vol. ii. p. 230. Notes.

† Scobell, part ii. p. 104.

‡ Neal, vol. iv. p. 15.

and honest historian. Baxter's statements on the subject are opposite to that of Neal, and, in this case, he must be admitted to be an impartial testimony. "Harrison's party, in the conventicle called the little parliament, as they cast out all the ministers of Wales at once (who, though very weak and bad enough, for the most part were better than none, or so few itinerants which they set up), so they attempted, and almost accomplished, the same in England."*

Commissioners were appointed to carry the act into execution, as well as to examine those who were to be employed as itinerants. To preserve the shadow of justice, they pretended to eject those who were ignorant, insufficient, or scandalous, or enemies to the present government. It was easy to bring all the clergy under the operation of an act, by which such latitude was allowed in the charges. Some few of the clergy who complied were permitted to remain, not, however, as parochial ministers, but itinerants. Neal allows that many were ejected, but not all; "but all that were ejected were for manifest scandal."† The testimony of Baxter is decisive as to the complete operation of the act: those who remained were retained merely as itinerants: "Harrison at once put down all the parish ministers in Wales, because that most of them were ignorant and scandalous, and set up a few itinerant preachers in their stead, who were, for number, incompetent for so great a charge, there being but one to many of those wide parishes; so that the people, having but a sermon once in many weeks, and nothing else in the mean time, were ready to turn papists or any thing: and this plight would the anabaptists and other sectaries have brought England to."‡ "You might ride ten or twenty miles on the Lord's day, where there were twenty churches, and not one door opened."§ The

* Baxter, part ii. p. 180.

† Neal, vol. iv. p. 116.

‡ Baxter, part ii. p. 70; Calamy, vol. i. p. 68.

§ A writer quoted by Walker, part i. p. 162.

grand jury of the county of Montgomery sent a petition to the parliament in 1652, complaining that in their own county there were no less than forty-seven churches left vacant; and in another petition from South Wales, it is alleged, that "the churches were in most places shut up, and the fabric thereof ready to fall to the ground for want of repair."* The whole country was left to the care of the very small number of itinerants appointed by the commissioners, in which state it remained until the restoration. Neal says, that they appointed six itinerants of university education for each county. He admits that the numbers sent were too few for the work. He adds: "To supply what was further wanting, they approved of several gifted laymen, members of churches, to travel into the neighbourhood and assist the people's devotions."† He admits at length, that the ministers employed were too few in number; "but," says he, "this was owing to the necessity of the case."‡

From the year 1649 or 1650, when the act came into operation, none of the parishes in Wales were blessed with the labours of a resident minister. Some counties contained from eighty to one hundred and twenty parishes, to supply which from six to ten itinerants were deemed sufficient. Under these circumstances the people were seldom favoured with the appearance of a minister, or with the hearing of a sermon; as each itinerant had to travel a circuit embracing many parishes, it was not possible for the churches to be opened except at distant intervals. Various appointments of itinerants were made between the years 1650 and 1660: many, to use the language of Neal, were "gifted laymen;" in other words, ignorant enthusiasts, destitute of even the common rudiments of education, and disqualified for the performance of the ministerial office. Learning, indeed,

* Walker, part i. pp. 156, 163.

† Neal, vol. iv. pp. 119, 121.

‡ Ibid.

during these times, was the object of scorn, and a stated ministry deemed antichristian. The absence of these men was a blessing of greater magnitude to a parish than their presence. So far from propagating the Gospel, the scheme was almost successful in entirely banishing it from the principality. Many of the preachers were tinctured with the wildest enthusiasm; and some even uttered blasphemy as the dictates of the Spirit. Some pretended to have seen the Saviour; others even described his form and lineaments. The Lord's prayer was styled a rotten prayer; and all the institutions and ordinances of religion were treated with contempt.

At one period the commissioners were placed in a situation of jeopardy. In the petition from South Wales, it was complained that the design of the act had not been accomplished. Colonel Freeman was entrusted with the petition, and supported its prayer in the house, describing, at the same time, the sad state of the parishes in Wales. The itinerants became alarmed; and their rage was chiefly directed against the colonel. To stir up the people in their favour, they prayed publicly that the Lord would punish him in his person, power, and place. The colonel shortly after falling sick, public thanksgivings were offered up to God for hearing the prayer of his saints. He recovered, however, from his sickness as suddenly as he had sickened, and the commissioners were compelled to resort to other means than prayers to defeat the petition. Accordingly, counter-petitions were got up under the auspices of Vavasor Powell, in which the satisfaction of the people at the success of the new system was described in strong language. The scheme succeeded, their adversaries' mouths were stopped, and the act continued in operation.

The havoc among the clergy was incredible. Many were reduced to beggary, while their characters were loaded with reproach and infamy. The commissioners represent the

country as being, except for the labours of the itinerants, immersed in almost heathen darkness.

There are nine hundred and sixty-five parishes in Wales. In South Wales there are six hundred and fifty-four livings; and from the accounts of the commissioners in 1654 only one hundred and twenty-seven of the old clergy remained. Nearly, if not quite, four hundred must therefore have been ejected in South Wales at that time; in South and North Wales the number could have been little less than six hundred. The annual amount of the livings in Wales was little short of 40,000*l*. This sum was deposited in a common stock, and placed at the command of the commissioners. At the restoration, the clergy were restored to their benefices, but their losses were never recovered: nor does it appear that the large sum collected from the livings of the clergy was employed by the commissioners in the manner enjoined by the act. It was stated at the time, and subsequent to the restoration, that the greater part was embezzled by the commissioners. Vavasor Powell endeavoured to repel the charge in 1662. Alluding to the assertion that the profits of the tithes were pocketed by the commissioners and other private individuals, he says, "For me to wipe off all these aspersions were but like Micaiah, to give my single testimony against some hundreds of the clergy who had spoken the contrary." He states, however, that he himself received only six or seven hundred pounds for his own labours during the space of twenty years. His account is a curious document. He assures us that all the clergy were not ejected; and that "some that were ejected did also sometimes preach to please some of their old parishioners, who would hear none else preach. There was not any lawful means unattempted to gain godly preachers to supply these; as going several times and sending divers letters to the universities and London, which were the likeliest places to afford helps; and divers were obtained by that means, though not so many as we

wished. He meets the charge "that many good men were ejected," by a denial, affirming, "I often publicly tendered this to the ejected ministers, that if they could manifest that they had the work of grace wrought in themselves, or could produce any that had received spiritual good by their ministry, they should (as far as it lay in my power) be restored to their places; but none ever claimed this."* This was a very unfair test. Many most excellent men are unable to produce particular instances of the spiritual benefit of their ministrations.

The period extending from 1640 to 1660 affords many topics for reflection. It was gravely proposed in one of Cromwell's parliaments, that all the parochial churches should be pulled down, on the ground that they had been polluted by idolatrous worship. Happily Cromwell was less enthusiastic than many by whom he was surrounded, and by whose means he arrived at the summit of power, or wilder schemes than those that were contemplated might have actually been put in execution. When Cromwell became protector, the presbyterians were already deprived of all spiritual authority; yet they still held most of the parochial churches: nor did the protector wish to eject them, as long as they quietly submitted to his government. His grand principle was the toleration of all religious creeds: many presbyterians were removed in consequence of refusing to subscribe the engagement, and their posts were invariably occupied by independents and sectaries. Though Oliver patronised the sects, he was unwilling to offend the presbyterians. The sectaries wished to abolish a stated ministry, but Cromwell's authority was interposed to prevent it: while, therefore, he permitted the sectaries to occupy the churches, he also pacified the presbyterians, by allowing a settled ministry, and suffering the voluntary exercise of their

* Vavasor Powell's Bird in the Cage. The Preface, containing an account of Wales under the operation of the act.

discipline among their own party. The sectaries would have adopted the itinerant system : this project was opposed by the presbyterians, and, in consequence of Cromwell's influence, was never executed. "The protector's wise conduct appeared in nothing more than his unwearied endeavours to make all religious parties easy. He indulged the army in their enthusiastic raptures, and sometimes joined in their prayers and sermons. He countenanced the presbyterians, by assuring them that he would maintain the public ministry. He supported the independents, by making them his chaplains, by preferring them to considerable livings."* Neal approves of the protector's conduct towards the presbyterians ; and thinks that it was well to disarm their discipline of its power, adding, that he left them all that was sufficient for the purposes of religion.†

For a considerable period, the examination of candidates for the ministry, and also the appointment to vacant livings, had been entirely in the hands of the presbyterians. Cromwell's policy induced him to grant equal privileges to the independents and sectaries ; and to effect his purpose, he nominated a certain number of individuals, to whom was entrusted the examination of candidates for the ministry. He perceived that if this power was confined to the presbyterians, they would reject all whose views did not correspond to their own : he therefore contrived a middle way of joining the several parties together. He felt, moreover, that he owed something to the independents for their support : he was anxious, therefore, that they should share the emoluments of the church with their rivals, who had monopolised the sequestered livings. The council issued an ordinance, March 20, 1653-4, by which it was decreed that every person, before institution to a benefice, should be examined and approved by the persons named in the ordinance. The

* Neal, vol. iv. p. 79.

† Ibid.

assembly of divines, to whom the examination of ministers had been intrusted, was no longer in existence : the same powers were now delegated to this new ecclesiastical body. Thirty-eight persons were appointed by the protector : they were generally termed “ triers,” and by that name are they known in history. Under the iron rule of presbytery, none could obtain institution to a living, who could not subscribe the covenant ; Cromwell therefore devised this new scheme, for the purpose of conferring equal privileges on the independents. “ They were mostly independents, with some sober presbyterians, and had power to try all that came for induction ; and without their approbation none were admitted.”* Neal’s statement is somewhat different : “ some were presbyterians, others independents, and two or three were baptists.”† The majority were undoubtedly independents : for even Neal admits some of the presbyterians refused to act. Cromwell’s inclination as well as policy led him to tolerate all parties. Hume asserts that he contemplated the erection of a national church, but without admitting either episcopacy or presbytery.

It was ordained that all patrons should present to vacant benefices within six months, or that the presentation for that time should lapse to the protector. The protector also appointed to all those livings formerly in the gift of the crown, and also to those belonging to bishops, deans, and chapters. In the preamble it is stated, that “ for some time no certain course for the supply of vacant places with able and fit ministers had been established.” It is then decreed, that every person appointed to a living shall be approved by the triers “ to be a person for the grace of God in him, his holy and unblameable conversation, as also for his knowledge and utterance, able and fit to preach the gospel.” Any five of the members might approve of a candidate, but nine

* Baxter, part i. p. 72.

† Neal, vol. iv. p. 103.

were necessary to reject him. An instrument in writing was given to those who were approved, without which no one could obtain possession. All the appointments since the preceding April were declared void, unless approved by the triers; and every candidate was required to produce a certificate of his godly life and conversation, from three persons of known godliness and integrity. When the candidate was approved, a document was drawn up, stating that the presentation of the patron of the living had been exhibited before the commissioners, and that they had approved the individual nominated by the patron to be a fit person to preach the gospel, and did grant him admission to the benefice.

It does not appear that any literary qualifications were required. Many of the successful candidates were grossly illiterate, being devoid of the first elements of education: indeed it became the fashion to revile the seats of learning as the abodes of superstition. When a certain individual was recommended to the triers on the ground of his learning, it was said by some of the members, that the Jesuits were learned, and therefore did more mischief. South says, "All learning was then cried down, so that with them the best preachers were such as could not read; and the best divines such as could not write: to be blind with them was a proper qualification of a spiritual guide; and to be book-learned, as they called it, and to be irreligious, were almost terms convertible, so that none were thought fit for the ministry but tradesmen and mechanics."* And again: "Latin was a mortal crime; and Greek, instead of being owned to be the language of the Holy Ghost, was looked upon as the sin against it: so that, in a word, they had all the confusion of Babel amongst them, without the diversity of tongues." If an individual could procure a certificate from three persons

* Sermons, vol. iii. p. 50.

in the interest of the protector, or known to the triers, their approbation followed as a matter of course. Ordination was not considered necessary to constitute a minister: and so jealous were the sectaries and independents on this subject, that, to prevent the possibility of construing the approval of the triers into something analogous to ordination, it was expressly stated in the ordinance, that their proceedings "should not be construed as a solemn setting apart any person to the office of the ministry; but only to be considered as a means for better supplying the nation with able preachers, and to capacitate them to receive the public maintenance appointed by law." From the decision of this body there was no appeal; nor were they required to assign their reasons for rejecting an applicant.* No standard was erected; all rested with the triers. Neal, who is disposed to view all their proceedings in a favourable light, complains of the want of a standard or rule as a defect in the ordinance: "this would have taken off all odium from themselves; but as matters now stood, men's qualifications were perhaps left too much to the arbitrary opinions and votes of the triers."†

These commissioners sat in London. The individuals who were presented to benefices were under the necessity of undertaking a journey to London, where they were often detained on frivolous pretences. To remedy this evil, sub-commissioners were appointed in the country: "they examined all who were able to come to London, but if any were unable, or were of doubtful qualifications between worthy and unworthy, they used to refer them to some ministers in the country where they lived, and to approve

* John Goodwin asserts that their power was greater than that of the bishops: the qualifications of persons presented to livings were sufficiently specified in the canons, and if a bishop refused to institute, he was compelled to assign his reason. The triers simply recorded their vote, "not approved."

† Neal, vol. iv. p. 105.

them, if they approved them.”* Though their proceedings are censured by Baxter, he rather qualifies or softens his censures, by admitting that they did much good. The passage is a curious one, and may be quoted in illustration of their character. He observes that his word will be taken, because he disowned their power, and was viewed as an adversary: he refused to try any upon their reference except a few, who, from some particular cause, would have been rejected by the triers. On some occasions Baxter was associated with some of his brethren to act under the triers, and to try individuals in his own neighbourhood: if these individuals were episcopalians in their views, or on any other account were likely to be obnoxious to the triers, Baxter consented to act, but not otherwise. The passage above alluded to, in which he describes their character, is as follows: “The truth is, that though their authority was null, and though some were too severe against all that were Arminians, and too particular in inquiring after evidences of sanctification in those whom they examined, and somewhat too lax in their admission of unlearned and erroneous men; yet, to give them their due, they did abundance of good to the church: they saved many a congregation from ignorant, ungodly, drunken teachers.”†

Their proceedings, were, however, marked by partiality, severity, and even bribery. It would be easy to select many cases of great hardship; a few, however, will suffice to shew the character of their proceedings. Mr. Duncomb was presented by the patron to the living of Geddesdon, Herts. The questions turned on the doctrines of election and perseverance: to the question, Can a man fall from grace? he replied, That when a man was once engrafted into Christ, he need not fear falling. When the case of David was alleged, he replied, That David only lost the sense of divine favour, and not the

* Baxter, part i. p. 72.

† Ibid.

habit of grace. On presenting his certificate, properly signed by three individuals of known integrity, it was observed, that they must not see with the eyes of others. He was dismissed, and, "not satisfied," was entered on the record. In this case the commissioners had received private information, to the effect that he was favourable to the royal cause. To this information, though secret, and incapable of contradiction, more attention was paid than to the certificate of his piety, signed by persons of unquestionable veracity. He incurred the expense of a nine weeks' attendance in London, and at last failed in his object.

Mr. Sadler was examined on various doctrinal points; and, though not rejected, he was remanded from time to time, till his patience became exhausted, and he was never instituted.* The candidates experienced no better treatment in the country: indeed, in the country, the ministers, who acted for the commissioners in London, were more likely to be influenced by reports unfavourable to the candidate. If, however, the triers acted in an arbitrary manner, the blame attaches to themselves, and not to Cromwell. A contemporary writer says: "He appointed a convention of laymen and churchmen, as well as presbyterians and independents and anabaptists, who had power to examine candidates, especially about the indwelling of the Spirit, and sometimes about civil matters, as, whether they liked a popular government. It was lawful to these to admit to, or debar from, the cure of souls whom they pleased, without any regard to ordination. I shall not mention how much, according to the various tempers of the men, by solicitations, promises, gifts, and bribes, things were simoniacally transacted, laymen, soldiers,

* Walker.—Neal states that the triers were accustomed, when notorious malignants appeared before them, to puzzle them with abstruse questions, that they might reject them: he asserts that the cases mentioned by Walker were of this kind, but he cites no authority. Is his assertion to be taken for fact? Vol. iv. p. 108.

bankrupt tradesmen, and shopkeepers, being also admitted into the ministry, and mingled with some skilful preachers who had been ordained.”*

Another project was set on foot a few months subsequent to the appointment of the triers; this was the “ordinance for the removal of scandalous, ignorant, and insufficient ministers.” Since the year 1640 the clergy had been harassed by various committees of sequestration; but a little quiet had been enjoyed since the dissolution of the long parliament. Neal states that this ordinance was intended to humble the clergy.† Several laymen were appointed, with a certain number of ministers, in each county, with authority to call before them all ministers or schoolmasters; to receive all charges that might be exhibited; and, on conviction, to remove them from their situations. The patron was required to present within four months, or the presentation to fall to the protector. One-fifth of the produce of the living was awarded to the wife and family of the ejected incumbent; but the sufferers under this ordinance were never able to recover this small pittance. It was also ordered that no minister or schoolmaster should teach or keep school in any place from which he had been formerly ejected; so that the sequestered clergy were prevented by this cruel ordinance from ever attempting to procure a maintenance in the places, where alone, from their acquaintance with the people, there was a reasonable chance of success.

The ordinance defines what is intended by the term “scandalous ministers:” it included those who held “blasphemous opinions; those who were convicted of profane swearing, of adultery, or drunkenness; of frequenting taverns, frequent playing at cards or dice, or profaning the sabbath.” In all this there was nothing that can be censured: but in the same term was included not only disaffection to the

* Bate’s *Rise and Progress of Troubles*, pp. 194, 195.

† Neal, vol. iv. p. 110.

government, but "publicly and frequently reading the book of common prayer." The reader will observe that the reading of the liturgy was a crime of equal magnitude with adultery, drunkenness, or profane swearing; and those conscientious men who were occasionally in the habit of using the service of the church were classed with fornicators and adulterers. When a clergyman was ejected for the enormous crime of reading the liturgy, however eminent his talents or elevated his piety, he became branded by the act as a scandalous minister. From Cromwell's general policy it appears difficult to account for this severe proscription of the liturgy; but it must be remembered, that he was powerfully influenced, throughout his remarkable career, by circumstances. To have permitted the use of the liturgy would have raised a storm, from a host of sectaries, which he would have found it impossible to appease. His opposition to the episcopalians arose, not from any dislike to the English church, for he was alike indifferent to all forms and creeds, but from the apprehension of danger in case he tolerated the obnoxious service-book. He also perceived that the general use of the liturgy would have strengthened the cause of the exiled monarch. The ordinance may be considered more as the act of the council than of the protector: he would probably have permitted the clergy to exercise their own discretion, had he been uncontrolled by his council, or uninfluenced by fear of the royalists. He was compelled to yield in some points to the fiery spirits of whom his council was composed. By a subsequent ordinance the judges of assize were commanded to be careful in suppressing ale-houses and the common prayer.

By the term "negligent," in the ordinance, were to be understood such ministers as omitted the public exercise of preaching and praying on the Lord's day. The extent of the expressions "ignorance and insufficiency," is not defined in the ordinance. It is simply stated, "such ministers and

schoolmasters shall be accounted ignorant and insufficient, as shall be so declared and adjudged by the commissioners in every county, or any five of them, together with five ministers from the same county." Thus, the determination was left to the discretion of ten men, who, by the exercise of their own judgment alone, were to decide the fate of any accused clergyman. It was not possible that a barbarous use should not be made of an ordinance by which so much latitude was permitted.

The commission thus constituted entered upon their labours with zeal and energy. If the charge of ignorance was alleged against a minister, and the commissioners were unfavourably disposed towards him, no evidence of superior qualifications could save him. Had they ejected all who were really ignorant and insufficient, they would have removed vast numbers of those who had obtained livings since the war, and who were merely soldiers or tradesmen; but the terms "ignorance and insufficiency" were not used in their common acceptation; they were used to signify the want of a knowledge of those peculiar views and opinions by which the sectarians and enthusiasts were distinguished. Under the operation of this ordinance, the clergy were at the mercy of any individual, who, from whatever cause, might exhibit a charge against them before the commissioners; and as the expenses were allowed to informers, they were not backward in accusing those ministers against whom they entertained dislike or prejudice. That the charge of cruelty on the part of the commissioners is not unfounded, and that ignorance and insufficiency were merely a pretence, under the cloak of which they ejected whomsoever they pleased, are points admitting of easy proof.* The case of

* Clement Walker, the presbyterian, and the well-known author of the "History of Independency," censures the proceedings of these committees, though, under the rule of presbytery, he had sanctioned them. Speaking of the grievances inflicted by the committees, he remarks, "that to historise

Pococke is alone sufficient to prove that their proceedings were barbarous, and to fix the stain of eternal disgrace upon their memory.

Pococke had been expelled from his professorship in 1651, for refusing the engagement; when he retired to his parsonage, in Berkshire. There, however, the malice of his enemies pursued him. In 1654, he was summoned before the commissioners for Berkshire. Nine articles were exhibited against him, in order to bring him under that part of the ordinance especially directed against scandalous ministers. Among other things, he was charged with reading the idolatrous common prayer; with disregarding fast and thanksgiving days; and with refusing to suffer some godly ministers to preach in his pulpit. The commissioners sat at Abingdon, whither Pococke repaired. He denied having used the liturgy since the act for its abolition: he had observed the fast and thanksgiving days: he owned that he had refused to admit into his pulpit a man whom Bush the informer had brought to the parish for that purpose. The commissioners were not satisfied with his answers, but proceeded to examine witnesses. These witnesses attempted to prove the use of the liturgy; had they succeeded, he would, according to the definition given by the ordinance, have been a scandalous clergyman. They asserted, that he had used part of the common prayer; for he commonly began divine service with these words, "Almighty and most merciful Father," and that he added soon after, "Praise ye the Lord." One witness stated, that on Easter Sunday he administered the sacrament in the old way; and, on being asked, why he thought it the old way, said, "because he made a prayer before and a prayer after." When asked, whether the

them at large would require a volume as big as the Book of Martyrs, and that the people were then generally of opinion that they might as easily find charity in hell as justice in any committee, and that the king hath taken down one star-chamber, and the parliament have set up a hundred."

prayers were the same with those used in the common prayer, the witness replied, "Yes, for aught he knew; for he talked in them of Peter, of Paul, and John."

The commissioners found it impossible to reject him as a scandalous clergyman; nothing defined in the ordinance, as being comprehended in that expression, could be proved against him: still they were unwilling to allow him to escape. They, therefore, charged him with ignorance and insufficiency. Here they had more latitude, as the terms were not defined in the ordinances; but those who were adjudged insufficient by the commissioners were to be ejected as such. One witness had stated his belief, that Mr. Pocke was "destitute of the spirit, though he preached saving truths according to the letter."* The charge of insufficiency was a most unfortunate one for the commissioners: it exposed their own ignorance, and rendered them ridiculous in the eyes of the public. At this stage of the proceedings, Owen interposed with the protector, through his secretary, Thurlow. In a letter to the secretary, he says, "There are in Berkshire some few men of mean quality and condition, rash, heady, enemies of tithes, who are for commissioners for ejecting of ministers. They alone sit and act; and are at this time casting out, on slight and trivial pretences, very worthy men: one in especial they intend the next week to eject, whose name is Pocke, a man of as unblamable a conversation as any that I know living, of repute for learning throughout the world, being the professor of Arabic in our university; so that they do exceedingly exasperate all men, and provoke them to the height. If any thing might be done to cause them to suspend acting until this storm be over, I cannot but think it would be good service to his highness and the commonwealth to do it."† Owen next repaired to Abingdon, with Ward, Wilkins, and Wallis,

* Twell's Life of Pocke.

† Thurlow's State Papers, vol. iii. p. 281.

and endeavoured to shew the folly of ejecting for insufficiency a man known over all Europe for his acquirements. In consequence of Owen's interference, Pococke was discharged from further attendance. The commissioners could not have selected a man of more celebrity as a scholar, or exemplary conduct as a clergyman. The rustic congregation were ignorant of the acquirements of their pastor: one of them, on being questioned respecting their minister, replied, "that he was a kind, neighbourly man, but no Latinist."

The treatment to which Pococke was subjected was disgraceful to the commissioners: it affords, moreover, a proof of their cruel and arbitrary proceedings. How many pious and conscientious men is it reasonable to suppose were ejected, when even Pococke, except for Owen's interposition, would have been sequestered for insufficiency. From the picture of their proceedings drawn by Owen, who states that they were casting out very worthy men, it is evident that vast numbers of the peaceable and well-disposed clergy must have been cast out under the operation of this ordinance. The commissioners were destitute of ability; this is manifest from Owen's statement: and it is not probable that their brethren in other counties were superior to those in Berkshire. It is also certain that the commissioners disregarded their instructions: informers were admitted to give testimony. When a clergyman was summoned to appear, the case was not decided until after the lapse of a considerable period, while all the expense of the proceedings fell on the accused.

It is, indeed, stated, that Cromwell mitigated the severity of the ordinance. In some places, and especially in London, it is certain that the protector interposed to check the violence of the commissioners; but in the counties the clergy were at the mercy of the committees. Some persons have stated, that none of the sober episcopal party were troubled by this ordinance. It is true, that the episcopalians

were not the objects of his hostility in consequence of their religious creed, and they actually enjoyed more liberty than under the iron rule of presbytery; but he feared them as enemies of his government; and the ordinance was, accordingly, carried into effect with regard to many of them, who had recovered their preferments since the death of the king.

During these times, the sectarians were permitted to erect meeting-houses for separate worship. Some refused to attend the parish churches, even when the pulpits were occupied by men of their own party. Many of the informers against the clergy were individuals who never entered the parish church, but who attended the meeting-house.

Not only were the ejected clergy prohibited, by this ordinance, from teaching in the places where they had formerly resided; but, by another in 1656, it was further enacted, that “no persons should keep in their families, for the education of their children, any ejected minister.” From the previous habits of the clergy, they could only hope to procure a subsistence by teaching youth; but here all their means of obtaining a living were taken away.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1658.

CROMWELL—SCENES AT HIS DEATH—ENTHUSIASM OF HIS CHAPLAINS—HIS CHARACTER—HE JOINS THE PURITANS—THEN WITH THE PRESBYTERIANS—THEN WITH THE INDEPENDENTS—PRAYS AND PREACHES—STATE OF THE SECTS AND EPISCOPACY UNDER CROMWELL—THE EPISCOPAL CLERGY PERMITTED TO PREACH.

THE various ordinances noticed in the last chapter continued in operation until the protector's death—an event rather unexpected, as it was not preceded by much illness. Some of the circumstances connected with his last days reflect much light on the religious state of the country at that singular period of English history. It is admitted by all the writers of that time, that, notwithstanding his elevation, and the apparent glory by which he was surrounded, he was unhappy in his own mind; but whether inward distress contributed towards the disease of the body, is not easy to determine. His disease at first was slow fever, which at length ended in ague: during the space of a week, no dangerous symptoms manifested themselves, and he walked out every second day. One of the physicians, who had sat up with Cromwell, observed to another of the faculty, that their patient would be light-headed; the other replied, "Then you are certainly a stranger in this house: don't you know what was done last night? The chaplains, and all who are dear to God, being dispersed into several parts of the palace, have prayed to God for his health, and all have brought this answer, he shall recover." "Nay," observes the author from whom the above is taken, "they did not so much pray to God for his health, as thank him for

the undoubted pledges of his recovery.”* This fact has been disputed by recent writers; yet it seems difficult to evade the force of the testimony adduced by so many authors. “He escaped,” says Baxter, “the attempts of many that thought to have despatched him sooner, but could not escape the stroke of God: though an independent, praying for him, said, ‘Lord, we ask not for his life, for that we are sure of; but that he may serve thee better than ever he has done.’”†

Burnet states, that Goodwin, who only a few minutes before the protector’s death had assured his brethren in the chapel at Whitehall that he would not die, immediately said, in addressing the Deity, “Thou hast deceived us, and we were deceived.” Mr. Orme doubts the accuracy of the anecdote, and supposed that if any such words were used by Goodwin, they were those of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xx. 7, and that they were used in the same sense “in which the prophet employs them, not as denoting what God had done, but what he had permitted men to do, ‘Thou hast suffered us to deceive ourselves, and we have been deceived.’”‡ There are, however, other expressions in reference to the protector in documents, of the authenticity of which there can be no doubt, almost approaching, if not fully equalling, the enthusiasm of Goodwin. An account of his death was published by authority, dated Whitehall, September 3, 1658, the day of his death. “It is remarkable (it is observed in this official document) how it pleased the Lord on this day to take him to rest, it having formerly been a day of labours to him; it having been a day of triumphs and thanksgiving for the memorable victories of Dunbar and Worcester; a day which, after so many strange

* Bates, p. 235.

† Baxter, part i. p. 98. Baxter adds in the margin, “As it was currently reported, without any contradiction that ever I heard of.”

‡ Orme’s Life of Owen, p. 251.

revolutions of Providence, high contradictions, and wicked conspiracies of unreasonable men, he lived once again to see; and then to die with great assurances and serenity of mind peaceably in his bed. Thus it hath proved to him to be a day of triumph indeed; there being much of providence in it, that, after so glorious crowns of victory placed on his head by God on this day, having neglected an earthly crown, he should now go to receive the crown of everlasting life.”* When the news of his death reached the ministers in the chapel at Whitehall, Sterry said it was good news, and that the spirit of the protector was now at the right hand of God; “and if he were there, what might not his family and the people of God now expect from him! For if he were so useful when in a mortal state, how much more influence would come from him now he was in heaven!” Fleetwood, writing to Henry Cromwell during Oliver’s sickness, mentions the fact of “his highness having had very great discoveries of the Lord to him in his sickness, and hath had some assurances of his being restored and made further serviceable in this work.” Thurlow, in a letter to Henry the day after the protector’s death, thus speaks: “Never was there any man so prayed for as he was during his sickness; so that he is gone to heaven, embalmed with the tears of his people, and upon wings of the prayers of his saints.”† In many of the addresses to Richard on his accession, Oliver was compared to Moses, Zerubbabel, Joshua, Gideon, and Elijah. The officers of the army, in their address, allude to Oliver as the chosen instrument for the accomplishment of the divine purposes; “the mentioning of whom (say they) may well strike our hearts with inconceivable scorn and abasement, to think that we by our sins have provoked the God of all our mercies to give us such a stroke, by taking from us the delight of our eyes, and, under God,

* Parliamentary History, vol. xxi. p. 226.

† Thurlow’s State Papers, vol. vii. p. 355, &c.

the captain of his people. Oh! how gloriously did the Lord appear for and with him in the midst of his people, making the mountains to become a plain before him, and carrying him upon the wings of faith and prayer above all difficulties and oppositions. How did the graces of God's spirit evidently shine forth in him! In his armies, he reckoned the choicest saints his chiefest worthies; in his family, those that were near and dear to him. In the things of God he had a tender and large heart to love all the saints, though of different judgments. He had great acquaintance with the Lord, mighty in faith and prayer, which made him so constant and glorious a victor. This our Moses, the servant of the Lord, is dead, and shall we not weep? Though we weep not for him, we cannot but weep for ourselves. We cannot but look after him, crying, 'Our father! our father! the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof.'"[†] The lord commissioner Fiennes, in addressing Richard's parliament on its meeting, compares the late protector to David: "As David, that sweet singer of Israel, was not more skilful to beget concert in discord, and in tuning the several and different strings of his harp to a melodious harmony, than his late highness was dexterous and wonderfully successful in keeping love between dissenting brethren, and preserving a Christian unity in a Christian and warrantable variety."[†]

Whether Cromwell was a mere enthusiast, or a consummate hypocrite, or a compound of enthusiasm and hypocrisy, is by no means easy to determine. That his abilities were of a high order is certain, or he could never have moulded, so as to suit his own purposes, the stern and fiery spirits of the age. He had arrived at the age of forty without evincing any proof of superior talents; and, but for the events in which he was destined to become an actor, he might have passed through life in ignorance of those powers with which

* Parliamentary History, vol. xxi. pp. 235, 236.

† Ib. p. 272.

he had been gifted. "This great man," says Granger, "whose genius was awakened by the distractions of his country, was looked upon as one of the people, till he was forty years of age. He had by instinct all the habits of military foresight, which in others are result of professional education and long experience. As soon as he embraced the profession of arms, by the force of natural genius alone he became an excellent officer." In times of commotion the talents of many individuals have been elicited, which, but for the occurrence of some stirring and remarkable event, might never have been discovered, and the possession of which was never dreamed of even by the individuals themselves. The characters of not a few of the great men in all ages have been moulded by the circumstances of the times. It cannot be doubted that the revolution developed the genius of Napoleon; and it is equally true that the civil wars called forth the talents of Cromwell. Had England and France, during the lives of those extraordinary men, reposed in peace, the individuals, whose deeds are registered in the indelible records of history, would probably have spent their allotted span of existence in their original obscurity, and at length have sunk into the grave undistinguished and unknown. Had Cromwell lived in the reign of James, he would probably have passed through life a gloomy and morose enthusiast.

There are, indeed, instances in which individuals are conscious of their own powers long before any circumstance arises to make them known to the public. Sheridan did not, in his first attempt in the house of commons, give any promise of those transcendent powers which, at a subsequent period, were so frequently displayed. Yet he was conscious that he possessed talents which must eventually raise him to distinction. Reflecting on the failure of his first speech, he started up, after resting his head upon his hand in a kind of reverie, exclaiming, "Well, it is in me, and shall come

out of me." In the generality of cases, however, it is accident that calls forth splendid talents: few men are aware of what they are capable, until they are placed in a situation calculated to call forth their energies.

When Cromwell was raised to the protectorate, his own name and that of his country were dreaded wherever the thunder of his cannon could be heard. The most powerful monarchs of Europe feared his enmity, and solicited his friendship. To him the death of the king has often been attributed; but that melancholy event was brought about by a concurrence of circumstances, over which Cromwell had no more control than many others, his associates in crime, though his inferiors in talent. The remote cause of that tragedy was the conduct of the presbyterians in refusing to yield to the conscientious scruples of Charles, until concessions were unavailing. Though Cromwell seized the reins of government, he did not wrest them from the king, but from a republican parliament: nor was the dissolution of that assembly viewed by any party in any other light than that of a blessing, since all parties had equally suffered under its tyranny. At the period of their dissolution, the wildest projects were in contemplation, and Cromwell was the only individual who could have prevented their execution.

It has been supposed that he aspired to the name and title of king, and that he would have accepted the honour, when proffered by his obsequious parliament, had he been able to manage the officers of his army. It is difficult to ascertain the motives by which he was influenced in declining to accept the offer of the crown: he probably saw that such an act would have involved him in danger with the army. He possessed, however, greater power than any English monarch, none of whom had ever been able to choose their parliaments as Cromwell's were chosen. The members of the little parliament were nominated by himself, and their names published, that the people might know who were the

representatives: and his other parliaments were convened almost in the same manner. So consummate was his skill in the management of the various parties in the country, that, by balancing one against another, he contrived to retain, until the close of his life, the power to which he had been raised.

The exiled monarch was aware of Cromwell's influence, and would have made many sacrifices to have secured his support. It appears certain, that Charles would have purchased his crown by a marriage with one of the protector's daughters; and, if his hands had not been imbrued in the blood of the king, it is probable that he would have concurred in an arrangement by which the crown would have been secured to his posterity.

After all, however, the religious character of Cromwell is involved in greater obscurity than his political. Previous to the troubles, he appears to have been in communion with the church of England, of which his parents were members. In the parish register at Huntingdon is the following entry: "Anno Domini 1599. Oliverus Filius Robt. Cromwell, gener Elizabethæ, uxoris ejus natus duosimo quinto die Aprilis, et baptizatus duosimo novo ejusdem mensis." Over this entry some one has written, "England's plague for five years." All Oliver's children were baptised according to the rites of the English church. At a later period, he was an avowed presbyterian; for, at the commencement of the war, the enemies of the church were almost unanimous in their religious opinions: they had other and more important matters to occupy their attention than quarrels and divisions among themselves. The sense of the common danger united them in one common bond; but when that danger was removed, they were divided and subdivided into various parties, who were animated by the fiercest hostility towards each other. For several years he acted with the presbyterians. In the year 1644, says Lilly, "the name

independent was not so much as spoken of." Cromwell now fell in with the independents, whose opinions were more tolerant than those of the presbyterians: he caressed and succoured, moreover, all the numerous sects; and in the army, encouraged preaching and praying among the troops. Both Cromwell and Ireton were accustomed to pray in the council of officers; and, on some occasions, the former even exercised the office of a preacher.* His sincerity has often been questioned: at an earlier period he was, probably, sincere in his enthusiasm; but after his elevation in the army, enthusiasm yielded to hypocrisy. The circumstances of the age favoured the prevalence of hypocrisy; for the phraseology of religion was adopted by all persons, and almost on all occasions. Many were, doubtless, sincere, though wild and visionary in their opinions; but many more were hypocrites, who had assumed the garb of religion as a cloak to conceal their wicked intentions. With the latter class Cromwell must be ranked after the war. The principle by which he was guided was that of a free and full toleration for all opinions; and to this principle the enthusiasm of the army is to be attributed. Cromwell was, however, less under the influence of this feeling than the soldiers: a mere enthusiast could not have acted with such uncommon prudence; could not act on all occasions with that sagacity by which the actions of Cromwell were marked. Cromwell was never hurried into an indiscreet action; whereas, mere enthusiasm would have betrayed him into many.†

* Whitelock, p. 286. There is a sermon in print, entitled "Cromwell's Learned, Devout, and Conscientious Exercises, held at Sir Peter Temple's, in Lincoln's Inn Fields."—*Grey's Hudibras*, vol. ii. p. 232. Mrs. Bendysh, Cromwell's grand-daughter, gravely insisted, that Oliver was one day seeking the Lord with such ardour of devotion, and striving for a gracious answer with such vehemence of spirit, that the tears were forced from him in such abundance, as to be seen under the closet door.—*Burton's Diary*, vol. iii. p. 211.

† "Baxter's character of the protector is unfavourable to his memory: he

Prior to the rise of the sectaries in the army, a severe and gloomy system prevailed : the garb of religion was assumed by almost all, and hypocrisy was almost universal. After the independents had gained the ascendancy in the parliament and in the army, the soldiers and mechanics not only exercised the gift of preaching among their respective followers, but actually seized on the pulpits in the parish churches. These excesses were permitted by Cromwell ; and, in return for this indulgence, the soldiers became entirely devoted to his wishes. The morals of the army, it is allowed, were uncontaminated : it was Cromwell's policy to enforce morality among the troops, and to allow full scope for enthusiasm. Mr. Orme admits, that Cromwell was more of a hypocrite than an enthusiast : " Cromwell, and others who ruled the army, and, as it answered their purpose, sometimes wrought on its religious feelings, and at other times on its revolutionary frenzy, can be considered as belonging to no religious body ; though they more naturally favoured the independent than any other, as, from its principles, they could more easily manage it in political matters." Extravagant as were the opinions of many of the soldiers, they were propagated at pleasure ; for Cromwell's policy allowed the utmost latitude for the expression of every notion, however wild : he knew how to use the religious language of the period to cloak his secret purposes, and, therefore, was considered by the soldiers as one of their own party.

It has been asserted that he was strongly tinged with superstitious notions. His physician told Sir Philip Warwick, that at an earlier period " he was melancholy, and

thought secrecy a virtue, and dissimulation no vice ; and simulation, that is, in plain English, a lie, or perfidiousness, to be a tolerable fault in case of necessity ; therefore, he kept fair with all. He carried it with such dissimulation, that anabaptists, independents, and antinomians, did all think that he was one of them."—*Life and Times*, pp. 99, 100.

had fancies about the cross at Huntingdon." If such feelings ever existed, they must have originated in a life of inactivity spent in the country: when the events of the war called him into active life, they no longer existed. Superstition never clouded his judgment, nor prevented him from acting with consummate policy. Some of his opinions were, indeed, very singular: his notions of moral obligation were very lax. Burnet states, that he had conversed with an individual who had known Cromwell; and that Cromwell believed, "that there were great occasions when men were called to great services, in the doing of which they were excused from the common rules of morality." This, says Neal, "was the protector's governing principle in all his unwarrantable stretches of power."*

Still, he was greatly indebted to circumstances for his sudden exaltation. The country, having long groaned under the tyranny of the parliament, were ready to second the endeavours of any individual who possessed sufficient energy and influence to overthrow that assembly. It was deemed more desirable to submit to the tyranny of one man than to that of many, divided, too, into various factions, and all seeking to promote their own particular views. There were not a few persons in the country who viewed him as the only individual capable of affording repose to a nation long wearied with domestic strife. This and other circumstances favoured his advancement to power.

Though a tyrant, however, Cromwell was the advocate of liberty of conscience; and his conduct to some of the episcopal clergy is a redeeming feature in his character. Liberty of conscience was the bond by which the discordant

* Neal, vol. iv. p. 203. Mr. Carrington, in his *Life of Cromwell*, alluding to one of his speeches, says, that it was "pronounced in so excellent a manner, as sufficiently manifested that (as the lord general himself was thoroughly persuaded) the Spirit of God acted in and by him."—*Parl. Hist.* vol. xx. p. 175.

elements in the army were connected together. Perceiving that the presbyterians intended to fasten their yoke on the country at large, he was determined to check their career of bigotry, by the advocacy of unbounded toleration. His objections to the episcopal church do not appear to have been so strong as those of the presbyterians, nor did he hold her in that utter detestation in which she was held by that body. Clarendon states, that Cromwell's two daughters were married first according to the form then in use, and afterwards, for the purpose of quieting their conscientious scruples, according to the rites of the English church. Such a proceeding would not have been tolerated under the presbyterians: the circumstance proves, that Cromwell did not consider the church of England as the mother of abominations, nor her rites and ceremonies as popish and idolatrous.* He did not escape the censures of his wild and enthusiastic supporters, in whose estimation prelacy was no better than popery. At the same time, episcopacy did not enjoy that liberty which was extended to all the sectaries. The sects were united in granting toleration to each other; but they were animated by the most hostile feelings towards the English church. In this respect they resembled the presbyterians. Neither her prostrate condition, nor the sufferings of her clergy, had the least influence in abating the hatred of the sectarians and presbyterians towards the church. Cromwell, though, in many instances, compelled to act in accordance with the principles of his council and the enthusiasts of the day, did not participate in their views; and though, by the letter of his ordinance, toleration was denied to prelates equally with catholics, he was in this matter more influenced by circumstances than by his own inclination. Had he been at full liberty, he would have

* Though the state of the church was sad and deplorable, yet it is not to be denied but that milder courses were used than under the rigid tyranny of others that went before.—*Bates's Elenchus*, p. 193.

granted toleration to the episcopalians as well as to the sectaries.

Unfavourable as was the state of the church under the commonwealth, it was better than under the domination of the presbyterians: they would not tolerate the common prayer or the ceremonies in public or private. "The dress of religion gave offence; they were determined to strip her of her white robe; to ravish the ring from her finger, to despoil her of every ornament, and to clothe her only in black."* Cromwell was "milder than others, as he allowed the common prayer in private."† Even in Oxford three hundred students were permitted to meet every Sunday to hear the liturgy by Owen, the protector's vice-chancellor. "Cromwell was for liberty of conscience to all, as far as consisted with the safety of his own government."‡ The private meetings of the clergy were connived at, and in London some of them were permitted to read the liturgy unmolested. Usher continued in the preachingship of Lincoln's Inn till his death. "He retained the church in restraint, though he permitted its clergy a little more liberty than the republican parliament had formerly allowed."§ Hume might have stated that he allowed a great deal more liberty. The presbyterian clergy were viewed by the protector with no more favour than the episcopal: in many instances the former were removed from their livings for refusing the engagement; and thus the episcopal clergy, as Sir Philip Warwick remarks, "saw the law of retaliation exercised on the presbyterian by the fanatic."||

It is certain that the condition of the episcopal clergy was improved after the fall of presbytery. "Though, in point of policy, the episcopalians were excepted from a legal toleration, their assemblies were connived at."¶ There are several

* Granger.

† Echard.

‡ Kennet.

§ Hume.

|| He gloried that he "had curbed that insolent sect, that would suffer none but itself."—NEAL, vol. iv. p. 79.

¶ Neal, vol. iv. p. 77.

notices in Evelyn's Memoirs, which prove that the clergy were allowed more liberty after the rise of the independents. "Owen," says Evelyn, "a sequestered minister, preached and gave the sacrament in his parlour, now out of use in the churches which the presbyterians had usurped." On another occasion he heard the common prayer at St. Peter's, Paul's Wharf, "a rare thing in those days." In 1652 he obtained permission to use the common prayer at Lady Brown's funeral at Deptford, where it had not been used for seven years: the same year, he states, no church was permitted to be open on Christmas-day, though, on some occasions, some few churches were privileged by special favour. For several years Evelyn was accustomed to go to London on festivals, when the sequestered clergy used the liturgy in private, "the ministers in the churches complying with the directory, and using extemporary prayers." In 1655, Evelyn adds, "Dr. Wilde preached at Easter at St. Gregory's, the ruling powers conniving at the use of the liturgy in this church alone." From some cause, not now to be ascertained, Wilde was the same year prohibited from preaching in churches: he preached his last sermon on Christmas-day; but, though the churches were closed to them, Wilde and his brethren were permitted to use the liturgy, and to preach in private, until the restoration. It is, however, evident that such indulgences were not granted in the country: in London, the presence and influence of the protector were sufficient to protect the clergy; but in the country the letter of the declaration against the common prayer was strictly observed. Of Cromwell, Clarendon remarks, "he was one of those men, 'quos vituperare ne inimici quidem possunt, nisi ut simul laudent.'"

CHAPTER XXV.

RICHARD CROMWELL.

RICHARD CROMWELL—RUMP RESTORED—MONK—SECLUDED MEMBERS RESTORED—VOTES OF THE RUMP REPEALED—DISSOLVE THEMSELVES—NEW PARLIAMENT—RESTORATION—REFLECTIONS—SURVIVING SEQUESTERED MINISTERS RESTORED—STATE OF THE CHURCH FROM 1660 TO 1662—PUBLIC ORDINATION—ACT TO LEGALISE MARRIAGES AND LAW PROCEEDINGS—DISSOLUTION.

THE death of Cromwell raised the hopes of all the contending parties, who, though differing in opinion on almost all subjects, whether in religion or politics, were united in opposing the protector's government. It was in consequence of the divisions among the various parties in the state, that Cromwell was raised to supreme power; and the same divisions now prepared the way for the restoration. He had been opposed by the republicans, many of whom were possessed of great influence in the army. Oliver had been empowered to nominate his successor; and his son Richard was proclaimed protector of the three kingdoms. Addresses of congratulation poured in from all quarters, and, for a time, appearances indicated a settled form of government. It was, however, impossible for Richard, who did not possess his father's hand, to control the jarring elements. The sects were still republicans; and the presbyterians were still attached to monarchy, and were ready to restore the king, on the condition that their own church government should be established: they had been propitiated by Cromwell, who allowed their discipline to continue in the church, but without its coercive power. They were offended with the protector for encouraging the sectaries; and if they submitted to his government, they were influenced by fear rather than by inclination.

Richard assembled a council of officers, at the instigation probably of Fleetwood and Desborough, who panted for the restoration of the republic. In the following January a parliament was convened, and dissolved in the ensuing April, through the influence of the council of officers, who disregarded the new protector, and managed the affairs of the nation themselves. The officers were unanimous for what was termed "the good old cause:" accordingly, it was speedily resolved to restore the long parliament. On the 7th of May, 1659, in obedience to the call of the council of officers, the parliament assembled. This assembly had in derision been denominated the "rump," in allusion to a fowl devoured all but the rump. The name was conferred upon them by Clement Walker, author of the "History of Independency." The presbyterian members, formerly secluded by the operation of Colonel Pride's Purge, were still denied admittance: they voted that no one should enter the house who had not sat in it since January 1, 1648-9. Thus the commonwealth was restored to the same state as before the dissolution of the long parliament. Richard sent in his resignation: he died peaceably in 1712.

The officers were still the rulers of the country: they petitioned the parliament, and recommended the extension of liberty of conscience to all creeds except popery and prelacy. Change now followed change in quick succession. The master-spring was removed from the machine of government by the death of Cromwell; and, after moving irregularly for a short time, it ceased altogether. All parties, with the exception of the sectaries, began to sigh for the restoration of the king, as the only event that could secure order, and heal the wounds of a bleeding country. The army and the parliament, as at the close of the war, were soon jealous of each other: on the refusal to attend to some petitions presented by the former, the council of officers prevented the members from assembling, by occupying all the avenues

leading to the house with troops. On the 26th October a committee of safety was nominated by the officers, and to them was intrusted the government of the country.

Monk had been for some time in Scotland with a considerable army: he determined, amid a choice of evils, to adhere to the parliament, and resolved to march his army into England. The members of the rump imagined that Monk intended to restore them to their seats; but it is probable that when he began his march he had no fixed object in view. Nor is it improbable that he intended to remain at the head of the army, and take advantage of circumstances. His real sentiments, if his opinions were formed, were not disclosed to any one. Portsmouth and other places declared for the parliament, and, soon after, the committee of safety, perceiving their difficulties, consented to the restoration of the rump, which assembled again on the 26th December, 1659. These events transpired before Monk had quitted the Scottish borders. On the 2d of January, 1659-60, the general entered England. At York, he received a letter from the speaker informing him of the recent occurrences, and intimating that there was no necessity for marching his troops to London. The general was not to be diverted from his purpose: he at once assigned a reason for continuing his march, namely, that he might assist the parliament in reducing the army to obedience. Even at this period it is impossible to decide whether Monk intended to serve the king or himself.

The parliament appointed a council of state, of which Monk was nominated a member. Each one took an oath to renounce the king, and to be faithful to the commonwealth. During his march, the general received numerous addresses, praying for the admission into the house of the presbyterian members secluded in 1648. Nor did Monk fail to discover that such a step would be acceptable to the country. The oppressions under which they had groaned

since the death of the king, and their disappointment in not being able to erect their own form of church polity, had operated a material change on the views and feelings of the presbyterians; and they were now ready to unite with the royalists in restoring the king.

Monk entered London on the 3d of February, and on the 6th went to the house, where he acknowledged the vote of thanks tendered to him for his late services. He alluded, though with caution, to the addresses presented relative to the secluded members; observing, at the same time, that it would be desirable to prevent the cavalier and fanatic parties from any share in the government. The general was, however, so far obedient to the parliament as to pull down the city gates at their request, in consequence of the refusal of the common council to pay taxes till the secluded members were restored; but when the city was exasperated, he soothed their feelings by forsaking the parliament. On his reconciliation with the city, the restoration of the secluded members was deemed certain. On the 22d of February, the members were introduced to the house by Monk, without any opposition from the rest. Before their introduction, Monk extracted a pledge to fix a time for their dissolution, and to call a new parliament. He wrote also to the different regiments, to acquaint them with what had transpired, as well as to request them to resist all attempts at restoring the king. It is alleged, that this course was adopted to keep the army in temper; but it is by no means clear that Monk had not entertained a thought of the restoration.*

As soon as the presbyterian members were restored, forming a majority in the house, they released all the king's friends who were in prison; annulled all the votes against the secluded members; repealed the oath of abjuration of

* Warburton remarks that Monk had no purpose to serve the king, till it appeared to him that it was in vain to think of serving any body else.

Charles Stuart; abrogated the engagement; and, on the 16th March, 1659-60, having first issued writs for the calling of a free parliament, dissolved themselves, according to their stipulation with Monk. In all these proceedings, the general acted a conspicuous part: seeing the current of public opinion to run in favour of the king, he shaped his course accordingly. It was determined by the late parliament, that no royalist should be elected; but, notwithstanding such a decree, the elections terminated in favour of the king. On the appointed day, April 25, 1660, the parliament assembled, both lords and commons, according to the ancient fashion. Monk informed them, that a messenger was arrived with a declaration from the king; and, after a few debates, it was resolved, in consequence of the sectaries and fanatics who might have gained strength during the discussions, that the king should be restored at once, without waiting to settle conditions. To such a proposition the presbyterians would not have consented, but from their fears of the sectaries. The king landed at Dover on the 25th May, 1660, and arrived at Whitehall on the 29th of the same month. Thus, by a reaction in the public mind, the monarchy was restored without bloodshed, after a prostration of twenty years. It is certain that Monk promoted the restoration, from the period when he discovered that the country and the parliament were ripe for such an event. The soldiers were so divided in sentiment, and dispersed in so many places, that the general, with the aid of his own troops and the city militia, experienced little difficulty in checking every hostile movement. The unsettled state of the country led the people to look to the restoration of the king as a blessing: only a few months before, the royal cause appeared hopeless. The event was brought about by a concurrence of circumstances. Cromwell, the chief obstacle, had been removed by death. When the hand by which the country had been ruled was paralysed by death, and the

voice that had so often inspired terror was silent, the presbyterians, who had submitted to the protectoral rule, began to lift up their heads. To circumvent the republicans in their plots, and to suppress the sectaries and independents, the presbyterians complied with Monk's proposition, that the sovereign should be restored unconditionally. After many years of suffering and exile, Charles was restored to the throne of his ancestors. At one period almost all the sovereigns of Europe succumbed to the protector, and denied Charles an asylum in their dominions; still he was preserved to be the instrument for healing the distractions of the country.

When the presbyterian members were restored by Monk, many of the clergy who had been sequestered for refusing the engagement were restored. Owen was removed from the deanery of Christ Church, and Reynolds, the presbyterian, was reinstated: the same result followed with regard to other posts in both the universities. Presbytery was again established; the directory was enforced; and the covenant was again hung up in all the churches. It was also ordered that the said solemn league should be hung up in the house.*

In the declaration from Breda, liberty was promised to tender consciences; but no mention was made of the precise form of government that should be established. Some of the ministers who were to meet Charles on the continent, desired him to pledge himself to establish presbytery: but the king was not to be caught in such a snare. However, several of the eminent presbyterian ministers were appointed chaplains, and occasionally preached in the royal presence. With the return of the king, the ancient laws, which had never been repealed, again came into operation. The various acts of parliament in favour of presbytery, prior to the year

* Parliamentary History, vol. xxii. p. 150.

1648, not having received the royal assent, were null and void; and the church of England, as a matter of course, was restored to the situation in which she was placed at the commencement of the war: hence all the surviving sequestered clergymen were restored, without any legislative enactment, to their respective preferments. The ministers who were now dispossessed could not reasonably complain of that as an act of persecution, which displaced them only to restore the legal possessors. Yet many of the advocates of the nonconformists describe this proceeding as a hardship inflicted on the presbyterian and sectarian ministers; and speak of the individuals removed from the livings of the legal incumbents, as sufferers for conscience sake. Many of the episcopal clergy had been in exile, or had eaten the bread of affliction for nearly twenty years. A finer specimen of silent and patient endurance under suffering was never exhibited than in the conduct of the episcopal clergy. In those parishes whose legal incumbents were dead, the present occupants remained. One writer states, that many hundreds of faithful ministers, holding sequestered livings, were displaced soon after his majesty's return. Yes! and where was the hardship? Surely the returning ministers had a better title than those who were dispossessed. They were not illegally displaced, as were the episcopal clergy, but by due course of law: they were merely dispossessed of what did not of right belong to them. It should be remembered that these men had long enjoyed the property of others, while the legal incumbents were pining in poverty and exile. The voice of law, of justice, and of reason, called aloud for the return of the sequestered clergy. When the reign of order succeeded that of confusion, matters naturally returned to the state in which they stood at the beginning of the war. The reader who is acquainted with the arguments used by the advocates of nonconformity to diminish the numbers of the sequestered episcopal clergy, will not fail to perceive that

the assertion just noticed militates against their own arguments : for how could the number of sequestered clergy have been inconsiderable, if many hundreds were alive, after nearly twenty years, to enter upon their former livings ?

There were, however, after the surviving clergy had been restored, many presbyterians, independents, baptists, and other sectaries, in possession of livings, who became sufferers under the act of 1662, and whose case will hereafter be stated and discussed. For the present the clergy were at liberty to conduct public worship according to their own inclinations. All the episcopalians, and many others whose sentiments on church government were Erastian, and who had complied with all the preceding changes, began to read the common prayer immediately after the restoration. During the space intervening between 1660 and 1662, the churches presented a somewhat singular appearance, some of the ministers conforming to the liturgy, some following the directory, and others rejecting all systems, and acting according to their own fancies. Though the liturgy was not enforced, it was the only legal form, as the act for its abolition was illegal. The cloud that had so long hung over the church of England was now dissipated ; and she emerged from the gloom, without having sustained any injury in her articles, homilies, and formularies : to them her members had adhered in all her troubles, and from them had they derived consolation during their season of adversity, and amid the dreariness of exile.

To satisfy the minds of the ministers, a declaration was issued, November 6, 1660, concerning ecclesiastical affairs, in the same strain as the letter from Breda. In this declaration allusion is made to the sentiments of the presbyterian ministers who met the king on the continent, and who expressed themselves not as opposed to the liturgy and ceremonies of the church, but only as desirous of some

few alterations : it is next stated that his majesty has hitherto been content with the exercise of his religion in his own chapel “ according to the constant practice and laws established, without enjoining that practice and the observance of those laws in the churches of the kingdom, in which we have undergone the censure of many, as if we were without that zeal for the church which we ought to have.” It is added, “ we have found ourselves not so candidly dealt with as we have deserved, and that there are unquiet and restless spirits, who, without abating any of their own distemper, continue their bitterness against the church.” After stating his former intention of calling a synod to settle all points of difference, his majesty declares that he shall “ give some determination to the matters in dispute, until such a synod may be called.” Many rules are laid down relative to the bishops and their ordinations. With regard to the liturgy, the declaration goes on, — “ In the mean time, although we do heartily wish and desire that the ministers in their several churches, because they dislike some clauses and expressions, would not totally lay aside the use of the book of common prayer, but read those parts against which there can be no exception ; yet, in compassion to divers of our good subjects, who scruple the use of it as it now is, our will and pleasure is, that none be punished or troubled for not using it, until it be reviewed and effectually reformed as aforesaid.” The rites and ceremonies to which objections had been raised were to be settled by a national synod, which his majesty promised to call as soon as possible. The cross in baptism, kneeling at the sacrament, bowing at the name of Jesus, and the use of the surplice, were to be observed or not, at the discretion of individuals : and as some scrupled the oath of canonical obedience, they were not, in consequence of such scruples, to be denied ordination and induction, provided they took the oaths of supremacy and

allegiance. No man was to be disquieted for difference of opinion in matters of religion.* In this state did every thing remain until the act of uniformity in 1662.

In the year 1661 there was a public ordination at Oxford, the first since the restoration. Neal says, that if the bishops had all died during the interregnum, the English church would have been lost. Had such an event occurred, the church of England must have applied to some foreign church in which episcopacy was retained: such an event, however, was not probable, as the exiled bishops would have taken special care to prevent the extinction of their order by ordaining others. But the church was not driven to such an extremity: several of the old bishops survived the restoration, and returned to their sees, and many of the most eminent of the sequestered clergy were now rewarded for their sufferings by an elevation to the episcopal bench.

The parliament that restored the king was designated the "convention parliament." One of the first measures after the king's return, was to get it constituted a legal assembly: an act to that effect was passed, and a bill of indemnity shortly after, from which none were excluded except those who were concerned in the murder of the late king. Another act, to legalise all judicial proceedings since the year 1640, and to render valid all marriages celebrated in whatever manner during the same period, was passed, and received the royal assent. The parliament was dissolved on the 29th December, 1660.

* Parliamentary History, vol. xxiii. p. 173 et seq.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ENTHUSIASM AND EXTRAVAGANCE OF THE PRECEDING PERIOD—EFFECTS ON
 PEOPLE SUBSEQUENT TO THE RESTORATION—ENTHUSIASTIC NAMES—
 TITLES OF BOOKS—EXTRACTS FROM SERMONS—PREACHING OF SOLDIERS
 —FAST AND THANKSGIVING DAYS—CHANGE IN DRESS—CATHEDRALS—
 DEBATES CONCERNING CHRISTMAS-DAY—TITHES.

THE present chapter will be devoted to a subject of no small interest, and one of considerable importance,—the extravagance and enthusiasm of the period embraced in the preceding chapters, and their probable influence in causing the majority of the country, at least in the upper classes, to go to the opposite extreme of immorality, licentiousness, and profaneness, during the reign of the second Charles.

In the reign of Charles the reaction was so great, that numbers became secret if not avowed infidels: many, even of those who, in the preceding times, had been loudest in the profession of the prevailing opinions, became violent opposers of every thing religious. During the interregnum a complete change was effected in the common phraseology: a change which paved the way for that obscenity and profanity in conversation so common in the reign of Charles. The name of God, and expressions from sacred scripture, were in the mouths of all and at all times: the usual names of persons were discarded for the names recorded in the inspired volume; nay, even the names of the evangelists and others in the New Testament were rejected, as little better than popish; and others selected from the historical books of the Old Testament. Not satisfied with the proper names, whole sentences from scripture were chosen by many as the Christian names of their children, or even adopted as their own, in the place of such heathenish names as Robert,

William, John, and Thomas. Hume gives a list of a jury, whose Christian names were either sentences taken from scripture or the theological language of the day: it has been stated, that the genealogy in the first chapter of Matthew might have been used as the roll-call of some of Cromwell's regiments. The Christian names assumed by the family of Barebones are well-known instances of the extravagance of the times.

Whoever takes a view of this section of our ecclesiastical history, will not fail to perceive that enthusiasm prevailed to an almost unlimited extent. Every new opinion found advocates; and as all were at liberty to become preachers, the most enthusiastic notions were promulgated without a compass by which to steer their course, or an anchor to keep them steady, amid the fluctuating waves of religious disputation, the various sects spent their time in endless discussions, many of them of a kind truly ludicrous. In former times, the fervour of enthusiasm had been repressed by restrictive laws, and was thereby pent up in the bosoms of individuals. Whenever there were any outbreakings of fanaticism, they were soon checked by the wholesome operation of ecclesiastical discipline. Almost all the soldiers were preachers; nor did they fail to exercise their gifts wherever they came. On one occasion six soldiers entered the church of Walton-upon-Thames during the time of service. "One soldier had a lantern with a candle burning in it, and four other candles not lighted. He told the people that he had a message from God, and wished to enter the pulpit, which not being granted, he assembled the people in the churchyard, when he told them that he had seen a vision, and was commanded to declare God's will, consisting of five lights. First, that the Sabbath was abolished; secondly, that tithes were abolished; thirdly, that ministers were abolished; fourthly, that magistrates were abolished, as Christ was reigning with his saints; fifthly, that the Bible

was abolished, as containing beggarly rudiments; and putting out the candle said, here my fifth light is put out.”* Every soldier could occupy the pulpit of any church near which his regiment might be stationed, to the exclusion of the parochial minister. Here he could broach any new doctrine, however absurd, the offspring of his own diseased imagination. “It is scarcely possible to image the tumult of absurdity in that age, when any unsettled innovator who could hatch a half-formed notion, produced it to the public; when any man might become a preacher, and almost every preacher could collect a congregation.”† The enthusiasm of the presbyterians was principally directed against images, crosses, painted windows, organs, and vestments; against mince-pies at Christmas, which were deemed abominations not to be tolerated; against bishops and ceremonies of the church. But the sectaries and soldiers led them much further. Had a contemporary writer set himself to collect the various acts of extravagance and wildness committed between 1640 and 1660, he would have produced a volume of a most singular nature.

* Walker’s Independency.

† Johnson’s Life of Waller. “I wonder,” says Featly, “that our door-posts and walls sweat not, upon which such notes as these have been lately affixed: On such a day such a brewer’s clerk exerciseth, such a tailor expoundeth, such a waterman teacheth.”—FEATLY’S *Dippers Dipt*. Preface. Hall, the presbyterian minister of King’s Norton University, published a work, dated 1651, entitled “The Pulpit Guarded,” occasioned by a dispute against

Lawrence Williams, a nailor, public teacher;

Thomas Palmer, a baker, preacher;

Thomas Hinde, a plough-wright, &c. &c.

Henry Oakes, a weaver, &c. &c.

Hum. Rogers (lately), a baker’s boy, &c. &c.

In the Preface, he says, after alluding to his sufferings under the bishops, “and now at last I have been set upon by the sectaries, who sometimes have spoken to me in the middle of a sermon, sometimes after, sometimes challenge me to dispute.”

A perusal of the sermons and other publications of the period will furnish ample evidence of the extravagance that prevailed. Strange and uncouth words, either compounded from those in common use, or expressly coined for the occasion, were introduced not only into conversation, but into the pulpit and printed sermons. Such words as "savingable," "muchness," "Christ-Jesusness," were of common occurrence.* The titles of books and pamphlets are evidences of the same extravagance. A book was published against bowing at the name of Jesus, entitled "Jesus-worship confuted." Lockyer, one of Cromwell's chaplains, printed a volume of sermons with the following title, "Christ sitting up with his Church in her Swooning State." Sir John Birkenhead, about the period of the restoration, published "The Children's Dictionary; an exact Collection of all new Words born since November 3, 1640, in Speeches, Prayers, and Sermons, as well those that signify something as nothing." In short, a complete revolution was effected in the common language of the day. "The English language was much corrupted by the preachers. The eloquence of the pulpit differed widely from every other species, and abounded in such figures as rhetoric has found no name for."†

It is painful to refer to the sermons and prayers of those times; and, in the estimation of some, it may appear like treating sacred things with levity. Nothing is further from the intention of the writer; nor would he unnecessarily inflict a wound on any serious feelings. It is, however,

* Granger. When saints' days were abolished, the word saint was discarded from the vocabulary of the parliamentarians. Churches, parishes, and streets, to which the name of any saint was given, were distinguished by a new name, or the word saint was dropped. To this practice Butler alludes:

"And force all churches, streets, and towns,

The holy title to renounce."—*Hudibras*, Canto iii. ver. 317–18.

See also a curious paper in the *Spectator*, No. 125.

† Granger, vol. ii. p. 33.

necessary to refer to these topics, in order to afford a true picture of the times.

How far the pulpit was used as an engine to stir up the war, has already been shewn; it was the vehicle for communicating news to the people. Nor are the sectaries alone chargeable with enthusiastic statements from the pulpit; for the example was set by the presbyterians. Many of the sermons of the most eminent of the presbyterian clergy, during the war, were not only stimulants to rebellion and bloodshed, but specimens of the wildest enthusiasm. "You have already," says one, "in a degree fulfilled that prophecy of Zachary, 'have wrote upon the bells or bridles of your horses, Holiness unto the Lord.' Write on still, you wise statesmen, write upon your foreheads, upon your brain-pans, Holiness unto the Lord. You valiant soldiers, go on in a pious prodigality of your blood and lives."* A Scots clergyman of the same period thus addressed his Maker, "To be free with you, Lord, we have done many things for thee that never entered into thy noddle; and yet we are content that thou take all the glory."† Another, speaking of malignants, asks, "Lord, what wilt thou do with these malignants? I'll tell thee, e'en take them up by the heels, and roast them in the chimney of hell. Lord, take the pestle of thy vengeance, and the mortar-piece of thy wrath, and make the brains of malignants a hodge-podge; but for thy own bairns, Lord, feed them with the prunes and raisins of thy promises: give them the boots of hope, and the spurs of confidence."‡ After the ascendancy of the army, a Scots minister avowed in his prayer, that unless God would deliver them from the sectaries he should not be their God.§ In 1643, a presbyterian minister, in his prayer, asks, "O Lord, when wilt thou take a chair and sit among the house of peers? when wilt

* Staunton, before the commons, 1644, p. 25.

† Collection of Scots sermons.

‡ Walker, p. 18.

§ Anderson's Sermon at Perth.

thou vote among the honourable commons?" "We know, O Lord," said another, "that Abraham made a covenant, and Moses and David made a covenant, and our Saviour made a covenant; but thy parliament's covenant is the greatest of all covenants."* In allusion to the coming in of the Scots, another minister said, "If this be not God's cause, then God is no God for me, but the devil is got up into heaven."†

From these passages, it is clear, that enthusiasm originated among the presbyterians, and was merely taken up and propagated by the sectaries. Yet, the presbyterian clergy raised the loudest outcries against the enthusiasm of the sects, forgetting that the latter only copied their own example. That the enthusiasm of the sectaries and soldiers was carried to a high pitch, is admitted; but the precedent was established by the presbyterians.

The practice of preaching among the troops originated soon after the new modelling of the army. Under the year 1646, Whitelock has the following observation:—"Other complaints of soldiers preaching, and those lately in esteem now called sectaries. Thus, we may see the inconstancy of the giddy multitude, and the uncertainty of worldly affairs."‡ The same year, articles were presented to the council of war against a trooper for preaching and expounding: the practice was not deemed unlawful; but as the soldier had designated the minister, in whose parish he had preached, a minister of antichrist, he was compelled to make an acknowledgment of his offence. § These practices were viewed by the presby-

* Whitelock, p. 449.

† A striking instance of presbyterian enthusiasm is to be found in the Book of Psalms set forth by authority of parliament in 1644, p. 193. The seventh verse of the ninety-fourth Psalm is thus rendered:

"The Lord yet shall not see, they say,
Nor Jacob's God shall note."

In the margin, the expression, "Jacob's God," is explained, "the God of the puritans."

‡ Whitelock, p. 240.

§ Ibid. p. 238.

terians as the greatest curse that could befall the country.* It was, however, impossible for them to check a practice that had originated with themselves. Even in Scotland, where the sects were less numerous, there were some breakings forth of that enthusiasm by which the proceedings of the sectaries were distinguished in England. In 1652, the women assembled in a body in the town of Perth, and actually expelled the clergy there assembled in synod: thirteen of them rallied at the distance of four miles, and voted that a synod should never more be held in that place. They also determined, that though the women had deserved the character of godly in 1638, for stoning the bishops, the whole sex should now be esteemed wicked.† It was a common practice for the soldiers to enter the churches, and dictate to the minister how he should conduct the public worship.‡ Others would call the ministers hirelings, and request them to descend from the pulpits. The presbyterian clergy were now the sufferers, and the soldiers and sectaries were viewed by them with feelings of abhorrence. Any person could occupy the pulpit, if he possessed sufficient influence with the people to persuade them to embrace his cause. On going into his parish church on the Sunday morning, Evelyn tells us, that he saw a mechanic of his own village in the pulpit, from which he preached to the people. Nor was the practice of rare occurrence.

Few chaplains were retained in the army after the new model, the officers and men performing the duties of the office themselves. Almost the only one retained was the celebrated Hugh Peters. There are several notices relative to Peters in Burton's "Diary of the Protector's Parliament," published a few years since. January 1657-8: "Peters prayed. He said that religion was left by our ancestors hot, fiery hot; but it was now fallen into lukewarm hands:

* Whitelock, p. 491.

† Weston's Life of Sanderson.

‡ Whitelock, p. 501.

we do not boil up our religion to its height. Other nations are seeking for a general peace; while we, for want of an enemy, are scratching one another. They say they will come over and choose their religion, when we have agreed upon a religion: when we serve our God better, they will serve him.* On fast and thanksgiving days, singular scenes were transacted, both by the independents and presbyterians. The monthly fast of the latter was spent in religious exercises from morning till night. In 1647, March 31st: "very long prayers and sermons," says White-lock, "as usual, on the monthly fast." Burton gives a description of a fast in 1657, under the independents:—"The house kept a day of humiliation. The exercises began at ten, and held till half-past five o'clock. Mr. Calamy's text was Isaiah, ix. 12; Mr. Griffith's, 2 Chronicles, xx.; both good sermons. The first smelled presbyterian; the other was for church government, but against imposing spirits, and it tasted a little of court holy water."† When Monk was marching from Scotland to London, after the death of Cromwell, he spent one day with his army at St. Albans. The day was appointed as a fast by authority. Peters, with two other ministers, conducted the services in the church, and the general's chaplain, Dr. Price, attended. "Peters supererogated, and prayed a long prayer in the general's quarters, too, at night. As for his sermon, he managed it with some dexterity at the first, allowing the cantings of his expressions. His text was Psalm cvii. 7. With his fingers on the cushion, he measured the right way from the Red Sea through the wilderness to Canaan: told us it was not forty days' march; but God led Israel forty years through the wilderness before they came thither: yet

* Burton's Diary, vol. ii. p. 346.

† Ibid. vol. ii. p. 346. The fasts were usually kept in St. Margaret's church; but after the fall of presbytery, some of the members preferred the house of commons itself.

this was still the Lord's right way, who led his people crinkledom cum crankledom."*

The revolution in dress was no less remarkable than in the language of the day. It was the practice to wear the hair long and flowing; but the puritans wore theirs closely cropped: hence the origin of the term Round Head. Colonel Hutchinson, though a puritan, was unwilling to lose his hair, nature having been very bountiful to him in this respect. He did not escape the censures of his party, who viewed long hair as an abomination not to be tolerated:—"Some would not allow him to be pious, because his hair was not to their cut."† The author of *Waverley* well describes the changes in the mode of dress. Speaking of the landlord at Windsor, during the interregnum, he says, "from a jolly fellow, he was sobered down to meet the times."

In 1652, it was referred to a committee of the rump parliament to consider what cathedrals should be pulled down, and how they might be applied to the payment of the public debts: a committee was ordered to examine Ely cathedral, and to frame an ordinance for selling the materials. These projects, however, were never executed; and, though threatened with destruction, the cathedrals remained. The protector's parliaments were not less enthusiastic; nor is it possible to determine to what lengths they would have proceeded, had they not been restrained by his powerful arm. It was gravely proposed on one occasion, that the records in the Tower should be burnt: Sir Matthew Hale exposed their folly and stopped their mouths.

The violence of the presbyterians, at an earlier period, against the festivals observed in the English church, has been noticed in a preceding page: the independents, though professing more tolerant sentiments, were not less hostile

* Parl. Hist. vol. xxii. p. 73.

† Life of Colonel Hutchinson.

to these feasts. Many long debates took place on the observance of Christmas-day; a very curious one is related by Burton:—"Colonel Matthew observed, 'The house is thin, much, I believe, occasioned by observation of this day. I have a short bill to prevent the superstition for the future.' 'I could get no rest all night,' said Mr. Robinson, 'for the preparation of this foolish day's solemnity. This renders us in the eyes of the people to be profane. We are, I doubt, returning to popery.' 'It is a very good time (Sir W. Strickland) to offer the bill this day, to bear your testimony against it, since the people observe it with more solemnity than they do the Lord's day.' Major-General Packe observed, 'if ever bill was well timed, this is. You see how the people keep up these superstitious observances to your face. One may pass from the Tower to Westminster, and not a shop open nor a creature stirring.' " * It is evident, from this curious debate, that the mass of the people were opposed to the proceedings of the presbyterians and independents on this and similar subjects: the changes introduced in those times were effected, not by the concurrence of the people, but by the workings of faction. Still, neither the presbyterians nor the sectaries could succeed in abolishing the observance of Christmas-day, and the other festivals of the church. In 1645, "the day, notwithstanding the ordinance, was generally observed in London, and the shops shut." † After the lapse of several years, Christmas-day was still observed: "We have had the superstition of Christmas worse than it hath been this four years, to my knowledge: every one shutting up their shops, and giving themselves up to superstitious practices, that we thought

* Burton, vol. i. p. 229.

† Whitelock, p. 191. In 1647, he records, "the shops were shut, notwithstanding the orders to put in execution the ordinance against holy days. At Canterbury, the mayor, while executing the ordinance on Christmas-day, was abused by the rude multitude."—Page 286.

had been dead ;” and again, “ these superstitions of Christmas were almost quite out of the way ; but we are gone back,—we are as bad as we were twenty years ago.” *

Very singular notions were entertained on the question of tithes,—not by the presbyterians, but by the sectaries and the soldiers. The presbyterians claimed them as the property of the church : it was with them a principle, that tithes belonged to the ministry by divine right. The independents declaimed against the practice, until they became the dominant party. It was, indeed, decided, that “ as soon as might be, a provision less subject to scruples, and more certain, be made for the maintenance of able and painful teachers ; and that till such provision be made, the present maintenance should not be taken away nor impeached.” In accordance with this declaration, the independents received the tithes as long as they remained in the livings. Baxter says, that some independents and baptists, though they accepted the livings, did not consider themselves as the parish ministers ; yet these scrupulous individuals hesitated not to receive the emoluments. They denounced tithes as antichristian, when paid to the regular clergy. The adage, “ *virtus post nummum*,” was exemplified in the conduct of those persons who succeeded in getting into the churches. In the protector’s first parliament, it was resolved, that “ until some better provision be made, the present public maintenance shall not be taken away nor impeached.” † Still, there were many among the various sects who rejected tithes altogether : they viewed the whole system as a portion of the Jewish economy, and, therefore, unlawful under the Christian dispensation. A petition was presented to the parliament in 1653, from some justices of the peace in the county of Kent, in which they desire that “ tithes of all sorts, root and branch, may be abolished : that that Jewish

* Cradock’s Divine Drops, p. 239.

† Burton, vol. i. p. 112.

and antichristian bondage and burden on the estates and consciences of the godly may cease, and that we may not be ensnared with the forced maintenance, or any thing like it, in the stead thereof. And your petitioners shall own the Lord in you, and bless the Lord for you; and pray, hope, and wait, to see your hands stretched out for the Lord, till you shall help to tear the flesh of the whore, and burn her with fire." The petitioners were called in, and the speaker, by command of the house, told them that "the business in your petition is, and shall be, in due time, under consideration; and that the house will do therein as the Lord shall direct them."* The business was entrusted to a committee, who at length brought in their report in favour of the continuance of tithes. In this state did the matter remain until the restoration: notwithstanding the outcries of some of the sectaries, tithes were never abolished.

* Parl. Hist. vol. xx. pp. 197, 198; Whitelock, p. 543.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PLOTS OF REPUBLICANS — BISHOPS RESTORED — OTHERS CREATED — CONFERENCE AT SAVOY — ALTERATIONS IN LITURGY — DEMANDS OF THE PRESBYTERIANS — ACT OF UNIFORMITY — PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS EXHORT EACH OTHER TO STEADFASTNESS — THEIR FAREWELL SERMONS.

SOON after the restoration of the king, a declaration was issued against conventicles. This proceeding was viewed as a breach of the late declaration, in which liberty was promised to tender consciences: it is, however, clear, that the framers of that declaration never contemplated a toleration for separate worship, but only relieving the clergy from their scruples relative to liturgy and ceremonies. Before the king had time to consolidate his power, the republicans began to plot its destruction. The influence of the sectaries in the old army rendered decisive measures necessary: a remedy was required, by the prompt application of which the evil might be checked. In suppressing their conventicles, the court did no more than had formerly been practised by the puritans.

Soon after, a proclamation was issued, authorising a certain number of bishops and divines to revise the liturgy, and to make such alterations as should be deemed necessary to satisfy scrupulous consciences: the nonconformists, by the same proclamation, were protected in not using the book of common prayer. Nine of the old bishops were still living; and others had been appointed to the vacant sees. Some of the sees were, however, kept open, in the hope that they might be accepted by the more eminent presbyterian ministers; but Reynolds alone was induced to receive the offered dignity. A conference was sought by the presbyterian divines, who began to be alarmed lest the old conformity

should be enforced. A certain number of bishops and divines met the presbyterian ministers at the Savoy: they met on the 25th March, 1661, and continued their discussions during four months. Usher's scheme was proposed by the presbyterians, but rejected by the bishops. This scheme was a very moderate episcopacy, or was, rather, presbytery grafted on episcopacy. At an earlier period, it had been proposed by Charles I. at the conference in the Isle of Wight, and refused by the presbyterians, who were now doomed to suffer the same disappointment which, by their own obstinacy, had been inflicted on the unfortunate sovereign.

The principal points in dispute at this conference regarded the apocryphal lessons, the cross in baptism, holy-days, the use of the surplice, and some few things of a similar nature. In short, the same objections were now raised, and the same arguments used, as had been resorted to at the commencement of the late reign. The alliance between church and state, the lawfulness of a prescribed form, and other points on which modern dissenters entertain such strong opinions, were never questioned by the presbyterians, either prior to or at this conference; nay, the necessity of an established church was insisted on as strongly by the one party as the other. The matters in dispute were confined within a comparatively narrow compass. During the conference, Baxter submitted a liturgy composed and arranged by himself, and proposed its adoption in the room of that venerable form of sound words composed by our pious reformers. "This action gave advantage against them as unreasonable men."* It was unreasonable to expect that a form, drawn up hastily by one individual, should be allowed by the assembled bishops and clergy to supersede that liturgy for which they had suffered so much. Both the

* Burnet.

presbyterians and the bishops were anxious to enforce conformity; the idea of separate worship was not countenanced by either party. Nothing was settled at this conference; if the bishops on the one hand were inflexible in refusing concessions, the presbyterians on the other were equally pertinacious in insisting on too many. If both parties had been disposed to yield in matters of minor consequence, the peace of the church would have been unbroken. At the same time the blame does not attach only to the episcopal party; they only walked in the steps of the presbyterians during and at the close of the war. The chancellor Hyde, and the surviving bishops and clergy, were disposed to view the presbyterians as the cause of all their sufferings; and the new parliament, composed principally of loyalists, adopted the same views.

When the new parliament assembled, Clarendon alluded to certain seditious sermons. It is supposed that he intended by this speech to pave the way for the subsequent measures. The commons ordered all their members to receive the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England; a proceeding that was viewed with suspicion by the presbyterians, though they might have recollected that the long parliament had often, during the first years of their session, issued similar orders. The bishops were also by this parliament restored to their temporal jurisdiction, and took their seats among the peers. From May 1660 until July 1661 the bishops were spiritual persons only. At the latter period, the act passed by Charles I., disabling them from exercising temporal jurisdiction, was repealed. In the royal chapel, the liturgy was used from the return of the king; and as the act for its abolition was illegal, it was also read in all those churches where the incumbents were favourable to its introduction. Two days only after the king was proclaimed, the liturgy was read before the peers; and in many parts of the country the ministers were presented before the

grand jurors for neglecting to use it, on the ground that the ancient laws were restored with the king.

During the summer of 1661 various rumours of conspiracies were in circulation. By some it has been supposed that these rumours were merely an artifice of the court party to give a colour to their proceedings. It appears that the king was satisfied to leave the subject of religion to the parliament; for he told them, that "the difficulties which concerned religion were too hard for him, and, therefore, he recommended them to their care who could best provide for them." He had promised liberty to tender consciences; but, if disposed, he would have found it extremely difficult to have kept his promise with a parliament like the present. Charles was engrossed by his pleasures; and, notwithstanding his declaration, he was ready to sacrifice the nonconformists to the resentment of the parliament. The speech, from which the above extract is taken, was intended to relieve him from the difficulties of the situation in which he was placed by his former declaration; and the parliament readily concurred in releasing him from the obligation.* Devoted to his pleasures, Charles never bestowed a thought on the subject of religion; and was heartily desirous to leave the whole matter with the parliament.

The morals of the sovereign were among the most distressing subjects connected with the restoration. The practices of the court exercised no inconsiderable influence on those of the country; the contamination descended from the palace of the sovereign to the mansion of the courtier, and from the abode of the latter to the lowest of his dependents: so that the whole country was subjected to a moral degradation.

It is quite clear that the parliament was more inclined to severity than the sovereign. "They were severe against

* Burnet.

the nonconformists, and would have gone further if they had not been restrained by the court."* The king certainly wished to introduce, or, at all events, to tolerate popery; and to effect his purpose, he was by no means averse to concur with the parliament in excluding the presbyterians from the church, in the expectation that such a large and powerful body would demand a general toleration with a voice that could not be suppressed; and that when the boon was granted to one party, it must, of necessity, be extended to all. On these points, however, the king and the parliament were at variance; for the latter refused to concede toleration to any.

After the conference at the Savoy, some few alterations were made in the liturgy by the bishops and clergy assembled in convocation. The prayer for all conditions of men, that for the parliament, and the general thanksgiving, were now added. The explanatory rubric relative to kneeling at the sacrament was restored, and stands now as it was found in King Edward's book. These alterations were intended to satisfy some of the scruples of the presbyterians, but they proved unsatisfactory. The advocates of the nonconformists complain of the uncompromising spirit of the episcopal party, but they are silent respecting the conduct of the presbyterians towards the church of England. It would have been desirable that a few concessions should have been granted for the purpose of retaining the presbyterians in the church; but when such a clamour is raised against the church for the line of policy pursued by the bishops at the period in question, it becomes necessary to remind the reader of the conduct of the presbyterians before the death of the king. It was not to be expected that the episcopal party, after their protracted sufferings under the treatment of the presbyterians, should be disposed to pay much attention to the pleas

* Comp. His. vol. iii. p. 239.

of the latter. The episcopal clergy had endured long privations; they had been unjustly deprived of their livings; and now that the circumstances of the two parties were changed, it is not surprising that the restored clergy should refuse to make any material alterations in the liturgy or discipline of the church. The English church had been twenty years under a cloud, and trampled upon by her enemies; yet, under all their misfortunes, her sons continued firm in their attachment to her principles. When the cloud was dispersed, her members refused to expunge or modify any portion of that liturgy, in defence of which they had gone into exile. Formerly, the presbyterians refused even to tolerate her worship; the extirpation of episcopacy was demanded and accomplished; and presbytery was attempted to be erected in its room. The very men who now demanded concessions, were those who united in a solemn league to destroy episcopacy. The church of England had been designated Babylon, Rome, and the scarlet whore, by men who now sought to be comprehended within her pale. Some years earlier, a few concessions on the part of the presbyterians would have restored tranquillity, and saved the life of the king; was it strange that the bishops should now refuse to concede to their scruples!

The book of common prayer, as revised by the convocation, was submitted to and approved by the parliament; and measures were immediately taken to secure its adoption throughout the country. On the 19th May, 1662, an act, called the Act of Uniformity, received the royal assent. It was enacted that it should come into operation on the 24th of the ensuing August. By this act every minister was compelled to subscribe to every thing contained in the book of common prayer. It was also enacted, that no minister should officiate in the church of England without episcopal ordination. The king was anxious that the execution of the act should rest in the crown; but the parliament flatly

refused to listen to such a proposal.* The interest of the presbyterians was greater in the court than in the parliament, not from any affection toward them on the part of the king, but from the hope that by tolerating them he should also be able to tolerate popery. The king fell in with the act as the most likely means to produce a general toleration; he imagined, moreover, that by the exercise of a dispensing power he should be able to disarm it of its severity. It is probable that their expectations from the court prevented some presbyterians from complying with the terms of uniformity.†

The church was now restored to her original position. At this time the best livings were held by presbyterians. Those who had not received episcopal ordination were required to submit to it. Conformity would leave a slur upon their character, while the loss of their preferments, and even poverty itself, were consequent on their nonconformity. Various consultations were held. Being so numerous, they expected that when it was discovered that they were determined to refuse to comply, some change would be effected in their favour. It is stated, that the catholics secretly encouraged the presbyterians in their determination. That portion of the court which was under catholic influence, persuaded the presbyterians to continue firm, and that either the act would be modified, or the king would skreen them from its effects.‡ The catholics were disappointed, and the anticipated results were never realised. This act was destructive to their hopes: toleration, at that time and under such circumstances, would probably have proved fatal to the existence of the protestant church. It was certainly the intention of the king and his catholic supporters to bring in popery under the cover of a toleration; and if the Act of Uniformity ruined the hopes of the catholics, the mouths

* Comp. Hist. vol. iii. p. 238.

† Ibid. p. 238.

‡ Ibid. p. 243.

of objectors ought to be stopped. So far from viewing it as an evil, the pious protestant will consider it as a safeguard to protestantism at a moment of imminent danger. When the people were aware of their danger ; and when the second James was departed from the land, when the church was secured from the inroads of popery by the succession of a protestant, and it was no longer necessary to deny toleration to the nonconformists, the boon was immediately granted. Surely it was a blessing to the country that catholicism was prevented from being established. Of this opinion were the nonconformists themselves, who, in the reign of James, refused the indulgence granted by the exercise of the dispensing power, when they perceived that the real object was the introduction of popery.

From the time of passing the act until the period fixed for its coming into operation, the ministers employed their time in exhorting one another to steadfastness. At length the Sunday preceding the 24th of August arrived. On that day the London ministers preached their farewell sermons, which were afterwards published in a collected volume. It is stated in round numbers that two thousand relinquished their preferments : but the statement is incorrect, inasmuch as many had been removed on the restoration of the king to make way for the surviving sequestered clergy. The piety of the ejected ministers has never been questioned ; but it was not greater than the piety of the sequestered clergy. The act and its framers have been the subject of very severe censure. Of those persons who, in the present day, denounce the act as unchristian, many entirely forget the character of the times, and form their opinions according to principles which history has since taught, but which were then unknown. Such persons denounce the church of England, as the patron of persecution, while the nonconformists are held up as the supporters of religious liberty. How remote such an opinion is from the truth, will appear in another chapter.

The parliament was compelled "to decide upon one of three courses: first, a liturgy of which all could approve, a thing manifestly impossible; secondly, not to insist upon uniformity; thirdly, to impose one uniform system upon all."* They adopted the last, in accordance with the acknowledged principles of the age. At that time, to enforce uniformity by penal laws, was deemed, both by episcopalians and presbyterians, not only lawful, but absolutely necessary to the existence of true religion. This plea is always urged by the advocates of nonconformity in palliation of the presbyterians during their ascendancy; and surely the same plea ought to be admitted in behalf of the framers of the Act of Uniformity. Notwithstanding all the obloquy reflected on the parliament, they only acted on the principles of the presbyterians, who refused to abate a single iota of their covenanted uniformity.

That such comparatively small matters, as the surplice and the cross, should have prevented the presbyterians from conformity, must ever be a subject of deep regret. They hesitated not to divide the church, in consequence of a few ceremonies of small importance. "They thought it a greater sin," says Jeremy Taylor, "to stand in a clean white garment than in separation from the church."

* Heber's Life of Taylor.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESBYTERIANS AND EPISCOPALIANS OF THAT PERIOD
 CONTRASTED — TOLERATION — ACTIONS COMPARED — SEVERE ACTS OF
 PRESBYTERIANS — THEIR TREATMENT OF SECTARIES — THEIR INTOLER-
 ANCE TO KING — TREATMENT OF CHILLINGWORTH — WRITINGS OF THE
 TWO PARTIES COMPARED — HOOKER'S POLITY, AND HALL ON EPISCOPACY,
 CONTRASTED WITH SMECTYMNUUS — EXTRACTS FROM SERMONS — VIEWS
 OF THE TWO PARTIES ON LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE — JEREMY TAYLOR
 THE FIRST ADVOCATE FOR IT — TAYLOR'S WORK CONTRASTED WITH CON-
 TEMPORARY WRITINGS OF THE PRESBYTERIANS — THE PUBLIC DOCUMENTS
 OF THE TWO PARTIES COMPARED — THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES, FOR-
 MULARIES, &c. WITH BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, CONFESSION, AND COVENANT
 — TREATMENT OF THOSE MINISTERS WHO CONFORMED.

WE now propose to discuss the principles of the two great parties at the restoration—the episcopalians and the presbyterians. Neither party deemed it lawful to tolerate separate worship; and the writings of the latter, as well as their actions, prove, that in the work of persecution they outstripped their episcopal brethren. Every species of abuse is heaped on the English church on account of the proceedings of 1662. To enable us to form an accurate estimate of the conduct of the episcopalians, it is necessary to examine not only the actions but the principles and opinions of the age. The conduct of the churchmen of that day is most unreasonably measured by the principles of the nineteenth century. It is not intended to insinuate that their principles on the subject of religious liberty were correct; but the same justice is due to them as to their opponents. After the presbyterians had discovered so much bigotry in putting down the liturgy, it would have been strange if the episcopalians had not evinced a strong desire for its preservation. A certain class of writers are ever recurring to what is termed the black day of St. Bartholomew; and the

church of England is stigmatised as alone the unbending opponent of liberty of conscience. Neal often asserts, that the puritans were as much inclined to persecute as the bishops; yet Neal's admission appears to be lost sight of, and the puritans are held up as the friends of religious freedom. The fullest liberty is now enjoyed by all religious bodies; all the various sects, though in their opinions "wide as the poles asunder," are indulged with the most unlimited toleration. The subject may now, therefore, be approached with calmness; no angry feelings, no opposing interests, no conflicting opinions, need now be mingled with the discussion of these topics.

From a comparison of the acts, principles, and writings of the two parties in that day, it will be proved, that in the matter of liberty of conscience the episcopal church was far in advance of the presbyterian hierarchy. Laud even was less rigorous in enforcing conformity than the presbyterians in insisting on the covenanted uniformity. The subject of religious liberty was not understood by either party: each party contended for the right of imposing their own system on the other, while the expedient of a toleration was allowed by neither. With all their goodness, says Neal, the puritans were unacquainted with the rights of conscience: the worst feature of presbyterianism, says Mr. Orme, was its intolerance. "The presbyterians," says another writer of the same class, alluding to their conduct during the troubles, "now gaining the ascendancy, discovered as strong a propensity to grasp at the same arbitrary power as that under which they had formerly groaned."* Those writers, whose education and prejudices incline them to take the most favourable view of the character and conduct of the puritans, are constrained to acknowledge that the episcopalians were not the only advocates of intolerance. The

* Brooke's Lives of Puritans.

church of England must, at all events, stand acquitted of the charge of exclusive bigotry.

Until the rise of the independents there were only two great parties, the episcopalians, and the puritans who became presbyterians. For many years the questions in dispute regarded only a few ceremonies: during the war the puritans changed their ground; instead of demanding a few alterations, they would not be satisfied with any thing short of the extirpation of the hierarchy. They became the dominant party, and allowed no greater liberty to those who differed from them than had been granted by Laud: they claimed the same pre-eminence for presbytery as had been enjoyed by the episcopal hierarchy. The establishment of presbytery was termed the setting Christ on his throne; and when they became possessed of the revenues of the establishment, "they were dissatisfied for the want of the top-stone of the building, church power."*

We shall attempt to prove that the church of England during the reign of the first Charles was less inimical to religious freedom than her opponents: and for this purpose the actions and the writings of the two parties will be examined and compared.

Even the advocates of the presbyterians are compelled to acknowledge their intolerance. Their government, says Neal, was as narrow as the prelatical: the same is admitted by Brooks and by Mr. Orme. Instances of severe treatment under the domination of presbytery may easily be adduced, which cannot be paralleled by any thing under the administration of Laud: the conduct of the parliamentary committees was inquisitorial, and more tyrannical than that of the bishops. Calamy and others have laboured to place the opinions and practices of the puritans in the most favourable light, as well as to magnify their sufferings and virtues: and

* Neal.

their works have contributed to foster the opinion that the episcopal clergy were a set of merciless persecutors. The readers of such works as those of Calamy, Neal, Brookes, and Orme, are never made acquainted with the sufferings of the episcopal clergy under presbyterian tyranny. If all the fiery lay puritans had been enumerated in the lists of sufferers, there would have been a dark as well as a bright side of the picture presented to the world. The piety of the most eminent conformists is scarcely admitted in works of the class above alluded to: but if Burton and Travers are ranked among the pious puritans, surely Hooker and Herbert may be placed in opposition to them as pious churchmen; and it can scarcely be doubted that the piety of Hall and Taylor was equal to any in the annals of puritanism.

It is the fashion to designate the Act of Uniformity as a black and execrable act: no justification of the measures of that period is intended; but the reader ought to be reminded that there was a presbyterian Act of Uniformity. All who maintained opinions at variance with the received notions, fell under its operation. It was called an act against heresy: but as all opinions were deemed heretical except such as squared with those of the prevailing party, it would have been more consistent, as well as more appropriate, to have denominated it an Act of Uniformity. It enacts that all persons who shall willingly maintain the doctrines specified in the ordinance, should be committed to prison until the next assize, when, if found guilty, the offenders should suffer death, as in cases of felony.* In allusion to this act, Neal says, "it is hardly to be paralleled among protestants:" and again, "this was one of the most shocking laws I have met with." Happily it passed at a time when the presbyterian power was on the wane, or many would have suffered under its operation. "The presbyterians of the present age are not

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 498.

only thankful that the confusions did not permit their predecessors to put this law in execution, but wish also that it could be blotted out of the records of time, for 'tis so very unrighteous, that no censure too severe can be passed upon it."* This ordinance was framed in 1648, and received the sanction of all the presbyterians; and during the same year the Scots parliament demanded that all anabaptists, separatists, and independents be suppressed.† No act of equal severity ever emanated from the episcopal church.

Biddle, an individual of some notoriety for his erroneous opinions, fell under the operation of this act. Having been accused of holding unsound opinions on the subject of the Holy Spirit, he was, in 1645, committed to the common gaol of Gloucester, though labouring under a dangerous disease. He remained in prison several years, and was frequently called before the assembly of divines. In 1648 he published a work on the Trinity, in which many unsound doctrines were broached: this book led them to apply to parliament for the above-mentioned ordinance against blasphemy and heresy. At a later period Biddle was actually tried for his life, under the authority of this very ordinance: the proceedings were arrested by the interposition of Cromwell, who, to rescue him from his persecutors, banished him to the island of Scilly. In 1658, through the favour of the protector, he returned: in 1662 he experienced the same treatment as other nonconformists; but his sufferings under the Act of Uniformity were trivial when compared with those he endured from the presbyterians. Under the latter his life was endangered: under the act of 1662 he was only restrained from propagating his opinions. The act against heresy shews the principles of presbytery: all Laud's severities, in comparison, sink into the shade. During Biddle's protracted imprisonment, not one of the presbyterian minis-

* Neal, vol. iii. p. 500.

† Rushworth, vol. vi. p. 388.

ters was prompted by motives of Christian charity to visit him in his solitude: Dr. Gunning, an episcopalian, a proscribed clergyman, was the only Christian minister who directed his steps to the prison. The severity of the act under which Biddle suffered was unequalled by any thing in the Act of Uniformity. It is, indeed, true that this act, owing to the opposition of the army, and the rapid increase among the independents, was never universal in its operation; but its very existence evinces the spirit of the presbyterians.*

Soon after the assembling of the long parliament, many clergymen were imprisoned, as well as sequestered from their benefices. The presbyterians complained of persecution under the bishops; yet, when power was placed in their own hands, with unexampled inconsistency they copied the example of the prelates. They did not fight in vindication of religious liberty, for every reasonable concession was made by Charles prior to the war; not to rescue themselves from the bishops, whose authority had ceased to exist when the war commenced; but for the purpose of imposing their own discipline. Not only episcopalians, but independents and baptists were subjected to severe penalties on refusing compliance with the presbyterian discipline.

Many cases of hardship and suffering, besides those of the episcopal clergy, occurred under the presbyterian discipline. A Mr. Knollys was one of the first who began to preach against infant baptism: he was committed to prison, where he continued several days; subsequent to his liberation he preached in the country, and narrowly escaped death from the violence of the mob, instigated by persons in authority. In a letter to a friend, he observes, "The city presbyterians have sent a letter to the synod against any toleration: and they are fasting and praying at Zion College this day about further contrivings against God's poor innocent ones.

* Biddle's Life, pp. 27, 33, 49, et seq

To-morrow there is a fast kept by both houses and the synod at Westminster. They say it is to seek God about the establishing of worship according to the covenant. They have first vowed, now they make inquiry." When Burroughs, one of the independents in the assembly, was reproached with conformity under the bishops, though he refused it under the rule of presbytery, he described the new conformity "as being as bad as the old," and complains of those "who were so bitter against their brethren who differed from them, when they differed as much from what they were not long since themselves." At an early period of the war an ordinance was issued for silencing unordained ministers, and such as should preach any thing contrary to the articles of faith or the directory.* This ordinance operated as severely against the independents and baptists as any of the acts of the high commission against the puritans. It has been stated, that the independents opposed the presbyterian ministers at Oxford who were sent by the parliament to preach the university into obedience: Erbury was the leader of the opposition: in Oxford he escaped persecution, owing to the presence of the army, but was not so fortunate in London at a subsequent period.

Mr. Brookes applauds the presbyterians, when describing their sufferings under the bishops; but when he describes the state of his own party, the independents, under the ascendancy of their rivals, he freely censures them: "The presbyterians gaining the ascendancy, and abusing their power too much, in imitation of their predecessors, proscribed all who did not fall in with their own peculiar sentiments."† Alluding to the period of the restoration, Mrs. Hutchinson remarks, "The presbyterians had long since espoused the royal interest and forsaken God and the people's cause, when they could not retain the reins of government in their own hands, and

* Whitelock, p. 236.

† Brooks's Lives.

exercise dominion over all their brethren." Had presbytery been established at the restoration, the independents and sectaries would have been suppressed with more rigour than was evinced by the framers of the Act of Uniformity.

But the conduct of the presbyterians to the fallen monarch was marked with greater intolerance and cruelty than any other action during their whole career. When at Holmby the king requested that his chaplains should attend him; this request was cruelly denied: he was not permitted even to use the liturgy in his own family. Such a refusal was never paralleled by any act of cruelty on the part of the bishops; it stamps the presbyterians with the brand of persecution. At the conference in the Isle of Wight, the parliamentary commissioners insisted on the king's using the directory, as a *sine quâ non* to his restoration. Charles consented to confirm the directory for three years; to repeal the statute enforcing the common prayer; to forego the use of the liturgy in his own family, provided he might use some other form; but all these concessions were insufficient: their refusal to grant the use of a prayer in his own family reflects the highest disgrace on the presbyterians. The bishops never interfered with private worship. Happy was it, that the career of these persecutors was checked by the army.

The same intolerance was displayed by the Scottish presbyterians. The insults heaped upon the fallen monarch in the Scottish camp were of the grossest description, and evince a total want of feeling on the part of their authors. On one occasion the preacher, in the presence of his majesty, gave out the fifty-first psalm in the Scottish version, commencing,

" Why dost thou, tyrant, boast thyself
Thy wicked works to praise."

Before the verse was sung, the king stood up and called for the fifty-sixth psalm:

" Have mercy, Lord, on me I pray,
For men would me devour."

The good sense and good feeling of the people prevailed over the cruelty of the preacher, for they immediately commenced the psalm chosen by his majesty.* It would scarcely be possible to produce from the annals of intolerance so great a proof of illiberality.

The lives of the clergy in Scotland who declined subscription to the covenant were endangered. "I have been dogged," says David Mitchel, "by some gentlemen, and followed with many mumbled threatenings behind my back, and then when in stairs swords drawn; and 'if they had the papist villain, oh!'"† Both in Scotland and in England, presbytery proved itself to be a genuine shoot from the stock of popery; for the papists could scarcely have acted with more rancour and bitterness.

When a bill was introduced into one of Cromwell's parliaments to suppress popery, prelacy, licentiousness, and profaneness, some one moved that presbytery might be added, but the proposition was not seconded; yet in 1648, the presbyterians declare that independency should be suppressed with anabaptism and Arminianism. Thus the presbyterians received more mercy from the independents than they had shewn to others.‡ The independents, indeed, granted liberty to all except catholics and prelatists. It was resolved in 1656, "that those ministers who shall agree with the public profession in matters of faith, although in their judgment and practice they differ in matters of discipline, shall not only have protection in the way of the churches and worship respectively; but be esteemed fit and capable, notwithstanding such differences, of any trust or promotion in these nations. That all others shall not only have protection, but be esteemed fit and capable of any civil trust. That such, who agree not in matters of faith with the public profession, shall not be capable of receiving the public mainte-

* Whitlocke, p. 234.

† Dalrymple's Memorials, p. 237.

‡ Burton's Diary.

nance appointed for the ministry."* Had equal moderation been displayed by the presbyterians, the king and the parliament would easily have been reconciled.

The treatment of the illustrious and incomparable Chillingworth by Cheynel is another proof of the cruel spirit of persecution by which the presbyterians were animated. Chillingworth died at Chichester, a garrison of the parliament. At the time of his death, Cheynel, who had professed a friendship for Chillingworth, was at Chichester as a chaplain to the garrison. It was the request of the dying man that his body might be buried according to the rites of the English church; but this request was refused. Instead of the liturgy, Cheynel met the corpse at the grave with Chillingworth's immortal book in his hand. Some time after the burial of this great man, Cheynel published an account of the funeral, and of his own conduct in the business. He states, that free liberty was allowed to all the malignants in the city to attend the interment of his corpse. He then relates, that he stood at the grave and addressed the persons who attended in the following manner: "Brethren, it was the earnest desire of that eminent scholar, whose body lies here before you, that his corpse might be interred according to the rites and customs appointed in the English liturgy; but his second request (in case that were denied him) was, that he might be buried in this city, after such a manner as might be obtained in these times of unhappy difference and bloody wars. The first request is denied for many reasons, of which you cannot be ignorant. It is too well known that he was once a professed papist and a grand seducer; and I have good reason to believe, that his return to England, commonly called his conversion, was a false and pretended conversion. And for my own part, I am fully convinced that he did not live or die a genuine son of the church of England. I retain the

* Burton, vol. i. p. 389.

usual phrase that you may know what I mean. I mean, he was not of the faith or religion established by law in England. He hath left that phantasy, which he called his religion, in this subtile book." Then throwing the book into the grave, he added: "Get thee gone, thou cursed book, which hast seduced so many precious souls; get thee gone, thou corrupt, rotten book, earth to earth, dust to dust; get thee gone into the place of rottenness, that thou mayest rot with thy author, and see corruption."* Neal quotes the last words, and adds, "a most unchristian and uncharitable imprecation."†

It has been attempted, in the preceding observations, to prove by a series of facts, that the episcopal hierarchy was less intolerant than the presbyterian. The argument will be greatly strengthened by a comparison between the writings of the two parties. A man's writings may always be taken as evidence of his opinions; and the writings of the episcopalians on the subject under discussion will not appear to their disadvantage when arranged on the same page with those of the presbyterians. Thus, from a comparison of the standard works of both parties, it will be seen that the views of the members of the English church were more liberal than those of her opponents. It would be unfair to select the works of scurrilous writers on either side; the standard works alone, therefore, of both parties will be referred to.

Let Hooker's "Polity," and Bishop Hall's controversial works be contrasted with the celebrated production, entitled "Smectymnuus." These were considered at the time as the chief works on both sides. With regard to Hooker, even his enemies must admit that it breathes throughout a spirit of conciliation and kindness; it abounds not in rash and uncharitable assertions; there are no harsh epithets applied to opponents. He establishes these propositions, that sacred

* Life by Des Maisieux.

† Neal, vol. iii. p. 102.

scripture is not a rule for discipline ; that the practice of the apostles, as they acted according to circumstances, is not an invariable rule for the church ; that many things indifferent may be practised though not enjoined in scripture ; and that the church may appoint ceremonies within the limit of scripture. These propositions are stated and defended with the greatest amenity of manners towards his opponents, and in a truly Christian spirit. Nothing is advanced respecting the Divine right of any form of church government. How different is the spirit running through the works of Cartwright, Travers, and others on the same side, at this early period of the controversy.

The most cursory perusal of Hall's writings will prove that he wrote in a most amiable spirit. Nothing of asperity or bitterness appears in his pages. However strongly he may have defended episcopacy as an apostolical institution, there is nothing uncharitable or unchristian in the tendency of his controversial writings. The enemies of the church may search in vain in the writings of Hall for any passages or sentences militating against Christian charity. On the other side is the publication already mentioned, the joint production of five eminent presbyterian divines ; Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstowe. The title of the work is made up of the initials of their names. The work embodies all their arguments. It was constantly appealed to as furnishing the most powerful weapon against their adversaries, and the best reply to their arguments. The Christian spirit of Hall is sought in vain in this celebrated work. Its unrelenting, reviling, and intolerant spirit may be discovered from some extracts. Their tirade against bishops is thus concluded : " The inhuman butcheries, bloodsheddings, and cruelties of Gardiner, Bonner, and the rest of the bishops, in Queen Mary's days, are so fresh in every man's memory, as that we conceive it a thing altogether unnecessary to

make mention of them. Only we fear that the guilt of the blood then shed should yet remain to be required at the hands of this nation, because it hath not quickly endeavoured to appease the wrath of God by a general and solemn humiliation for it. What the practices of the prelates have been ever since, from the beginning of Queen Elizabeth to this present day, would fill a volume like Ezekiel's roll with lamentations, mourning, and wo, to record. For it hath been their great design to hinder all further reformation; to bring in doctrines of popery, Arminianism, and libertinism; to maintain, propagate, and much increase the burden of human ceremonies; to keep out and beat down the preaching of the word; to silence the faithful ministers of it; to oppose and persecute the most zealous professors, and to turn all religion to a pompous outside; and to tread down the power of godliness: insomuch, that it is come to an ordinary proverb, that when any thing is spoiled, we use to say, 'The bishop's foot hath been in it.' And in this and much more that might be said, fulfilling Bishop Bonner's prophecy, who, when he saw in King Edward's reformation there was a reservation of the ceremonies, is credibly reported to have used these words, 'since they have begun to taste our broth, they will not be long ere they will eat our beef.'"*

The falsehoods, coarseness, and bigotry of this sentence cannot be equalled by any thing in the writings of Hall or his brethren. It was written by men episcopally ordained, and who, in 1662, were again willing to submit to bishops provided a few ceremonies were rejected. In the same work episcopacy is termed "a stirrup for antichrist to get into the saddle."† The bishops are called "rotten members, sons of Belial."‡ Yet many bishops have been the ablest defenders

* Smectymnuus, pp. 77, 78.

† Ibid. 30.

‡ Ibid. 68. Hall himself is termed "false and confident, a self-confounding man."—P. 2.

of the faith against popery ; and, at a later period, the advocates of the Smectymnuean views acted with more severity than the bishops. The severity of this work, and its uncharitable spirit is reluctantly admitted by the advocates of nonconformity. “ It is written,” says one, “ with great fierceness of spirit, and much asperity in language, containing eighteen sections, in the last of which the differences between the prelatists and puritans are aggravated with great bitterness.”*

As we descend to the period of the war, the same spirit of bigotry and intolerance is discovered in the sermons of the presbyterian clergy, especially those that were preached before the parliament. Episcopal government was termed “ a fretting gangrene, a spreading leprosy, an insupportable tyranny. Up with it, up with it to the bottom, root and branch, hip and thigh ; destroy these Amalekites, and let their place be no more found. Let popery find no favour, because it is treasonable ; prelacy as little, because it is tyrannical.”† In another sermon, the same preacher says : “ With a good conscience have your honours rooted up and cast out of the church that evil tree (episcopacy), which God did never plant.” And again : “ It cannot be denied that episcopacy is such a supporter of papacy, that when the one falls the other cannot stand. Pluck up but this one weed in the antichristian kingdoms over sea ; let bishops only be removed from Italy and Spain, Germany and France, as they are from Britain, the pope can no more stand thereafter than a head without a body or limbs.” “ Did not,” says Gillespie, “ the land make idol-gods of the prelatical clergy, and feared them more than God. Is it not a righteous thing with the Lord to make these your idols his rod to correct you.” “ We have,” says another, “ a godly generation among us, and an ungodly generation, that weep with a

* Brooks, vol. iii. p. 246.

† Coleman's Sermons to Commons, 1645, pp. 24, 64.

loud voice and complain that their gods are gone, their god episcopacy, their god liturgy, the organ and the surplice.”* “The Lord would have you to demolish all high places, and not to leave so much as the stump of Dagon remaining; yea, to bury all the relics of Romish Jezebel. Also, the Lord doth expect that you should promote the late solemn league and covenant, that triple cable of the three kingdoms by which the anchor of our hope is fastened, that threefold cord that binds all the three kingdoms together and unto God.”† The same writer exults over the fall of Laud in the strain of an American Indian: “Blessed be God that you have now put into the scales of justice the arch-prelate of the land. Believe it, such services as these are the way to procure unto us a valley of Achor for a door of hope.”‡ And, speaking of the work of reformation in allusion to Ezekiel, chap. xlvii.: “There we do get ground as to perfect a protestation into a covenant, to ripen an impeachment into a root and branch, and, in a word, to settle an assembly of divines a general refined fire to try all metals in the church.” And in allusion to the building of the temple: “You are hewing in the house of parliament; the divines are squaring in their assembly; in one night the Lord is able to work upon the heart of the king, and to deliver him into the bosom of you his faithful council, and then the whole work may suddenly be passed and finished.” In the close of the sermon, the preacher adds: “Lastly, if you may not be permitted to do as much as David or Solomon, yet, at least, let us endeavour to play the Sampson. My meaning is this; better for us, if we cannot outlive antichrist, outlive Babylon, and the enemies of reformation, to adventure ourselves to death in the cause. There are two special promises which I will commend unto you; oh that they were written over the doors of the houses of parliament! Matth.

* Staunton's Sermon, 1644. Preface.

† Bond to the Commons, p. 48. 1644.

‡ Ibid. p. 49.

xix. 29 ; Mark, viii. 35. If these places do deceive an active believer at last, then let it be written upon my grave, Here lieth that minister that was mistaken in his God and gospel.”* While every species of abuse is heaped upon the church of England by these militant saints in their sermons before the parliament, the covenant and presbytery are lauded as the special work of God. “ We have lifted up our hands to God in it (the covenant) in the day of our calamity, when we were very low ; and since that time God hath raised us up very high.”† “ Israel’s sparing the Canaanites,” says the same individual, “ cost them full dear. They proved thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes. Look we to it lest it prove so with us.” The insinuation is obvious in this passage, and its antichristian spirit cannot be mistaken ; it was intended to spur on the commons in the work of persecution, under the pretence of reformation. Did the bishops ever evince such a merciless disposition ?

Another worthy divine of the same class says : “ Instead of the high commission, which was a sore scourge to many godly and faithful ministers, we have an honourable committee, that turns the wheel upon such as are scandalous and unworthy. In the room of Jeroboam’s priests, burning and shining lights are multiplied. In the place of a long liturgy, we are in hope of a pithy directory. Instead of prelatical rails about the table, we have the scripture rules of church discipline in good forwardness. Instead of the prelates’ oaths to establish their own exorbitant power, we have a solemn covenant with God, engaging us to endeavour reformation according to his word, yea, and the extirpation of popery and prelacy itself.”‡ In a subsequent page, when answering the question, “ What preparations should we make for the building of God’s house ?” he adds, “ First, down with the old building of popery and prelacy. Prelacy was the scaffold

* Bond, pp. 56, 57.

† Palmer’s Sermon, 1644, p. 42.

‡ Hill’s Sermon, 1644, p. 28.

whereby the building of popery was raised, and now many would retain it as a crutch to support tottering Babylon. Secondly, when you have pulled down the old building, leave no rubbish upon the place. Away with ceremonies, altars, crucifixes.”* Speaking of the covenant, another divine observes: “The stones of these walls (*i. e.* Margaret’s Church), and the timber of this house, will rise up in judgment against us if we forget it. And though there may be no comparison between a man’s covenant and God’s, yet I hope I may say of this, it is holy, just, and good. England shall be England or as Sodom and Gomorrah, according as it breaks or keeps this covenant.”†

These extracts might be multiplied to an incredible extent; but the preceding are a sufficient sample of the spirit of the presbyterians towards the church of England. These sermons were only an earnest of their actions at a period a little subsequent. Episcopacy was now fallen; yet the divines of the assembly exult as over an enemy. The episcopalians never acted with such bitter hostility towards the puritans: the unchristian spirit, to say nothing of the profanity, of many of the allusions, cannot be paralleled in the writings or sermons of the episcopal clergy, either prior or subsequent to the period in question. These sermons were first addressed to the parliament: the preachers received the thanks of the houses; and then, by their order, they were printed and circulated throughout the length and breadth of the land.

On the questions in debate during the reign of Charles I., as schism, toleration, and others of a kindred nature, the presbyterians evinced a similar spirit of bigotry, and far outstripped the episcopalians of that and the preceding reign. When Queen Elizabeth and King James refused to concede to the scruples of the puritans, they were charged with a

* Hill’s Sermon, pp. 35, 36.

† Seaman’s Sermon, 1644, p. 45.

popish leaning; a charge as unjust as it was false. Even at that time, according to Burnet, "they were factious and insolent and spiteful against all who differed from them:" and when they became presbyterian in their views, they would not tolerate any deviation from the new discipline. On the subject of liberty of conscience, the writings of the two parties are greatly at variance: there is a spirit of liberality in those of the episcopalians, while those of the presbyterians breathe out cruelty and strife. The first regular defence of toleration emanated from the church: it was the production of Jeremy Taylor. It is entitled, "The Liberty of Prophecyng," and was published while presbytery was flourishing in England. During the reign of presbytery, no one dreamed of toleration: Taylor was the first to advocate liberty of conscience. It was the "first attempt to conciliate in favour of toleration; which, though now the rule of action professed by all sects, was then regarded as a perilous and portentous novelty. No party was yet found to perceive the wickedness of persecution. The sects under oppression exclaimed against their rulers, not as being persecutors at all, but as persecuting those who professed the truth."* Taylor's work appeared before the ascendancy of the independents, and during the struggles of the presbyterians to consolidate their power by a series of efforts, which eventually proved their ruin. A host of publications appeared against Taylor's book, and the views advocated therein. Rutherford published his "Free Disputations against Pretended Liberty of Conscience;" it is characterised by Bishop Heber "as the most elaborate defence of persecution which has ever appeared in a Christian country." The proceedings of the presbyterians called forth the cutting satire of Milton: his lines "On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament," are illustrative of the subject under review.

* Heber's Life of Taylor.

"Because you have thrown off your prelate lord,
 And with stiff vows renounc'd his liturgy,
 To seize the widow'd whore plurality
 From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd ;
 Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
 To force our consciences that Christ set free,
 And ride us with a classic hierarchy
 Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rutherford ?
 Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,
 Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
 Must now be nam'd and printed heretics,
 By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call :
 But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
 Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent ;
 That so the parliament
 May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
 Clip your phylacteries, though balk your ears,
 And succour our just fears,
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
 New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large."

Milton understood the nature of religious liberty better than most of his contemporaries. The very idea of toleration terrified the presbyterians: the assembly constantly opposed it, and stirred up the sects to oppose it. In a conference between the presbyterians and independents, it was positively denied. "Little did the presbyterians think," says Neal, "that in less than twenty years all their artillery would be turned against themselves; that they should be reduced to the necessity of pleading for that indulgence which they now denied their brethren." After the sects had sprung up in the army, the London clergy were alarmed, and frequently assembled to devise measures to stop their progress: they addressed a letter to the assembly, beseeching them to oppose the great Diana of the presbyterians. In this letter numerous arguments are adduced against toleration: "no such toleration," say they, "hath hitherto been established (so far as we know) in any Christian state." They then declare "independency to be a schism, and that no schism is to be tolerated

in the church." They enumerate "many mischiefs that will inevitably follow toleration : the life and power of godliness will be eaten out by frivolous disputes and vain janglings ; and the whole church of England, in a short time, will be swallowed up with destruction and confusion : thereby we shall be involved in the guilt of other men's sins. It seems utterly impossible (if such toleration should be) that the Lord should be one, and his name one." After many other arguments to the same effect, they add, "These are some of the many considerations which make deep impressions upon our spirits, against that great Diana of independents, and all the sectaries so much cried up by them in these distracted times, viz. a toleration, a toleration." The efforts of the London clergy were seconded by the Scots parliament, who, in a letter to the two houses at Westminster, deprecate the "toleration of any sects or schisms." When the sovereign was with the Scots army, the presbyterians in London, encouraged by the circumstance, complained loudly that the golden reins of discipline were loosened, and sectaries swarmed by virtue of a toleration. In 1647, the London clergy published "A Testimony to the Truth, and to one Solemn League and Covenant." Among many errors enumerated, is the "error of toleration, patronising and promoting all other errors:" "we testify," say they, "our great dislike of prelacy, Erastianism, Brownism, and independency; and that we detest the forementioned toleration."

Besides these public and official documents, the pens of the most celebrated presbyterians were employed against the new monster, in a series of pamphlets, all breathing threatenings and slaughters. "If ministers will witness for truth and against error, they must set themselves against error, as the principal inlet to all error and heresy : for if toleration be granted, all preaching will not keep them out. If toleration be granted, the devil will be too hard for us. Toleration is destructive to the glory of God and the salvation of souls. If

the parliament, city, yea, and all the people, were for a toleration, yet ministers ought to preach their reasons against it, venturing the loss of liberties, estates, lives, and all in that cause, and inflame us with zeal against a toleration, the great Diana of the sectaries." And again: "As original sin is the fundamental sin, having in it the seeds and spawn of all sin; so a toleration hath in it all errors and evils. This is the Abaddon, Apollyon, the destroyer of all religion, therefore the devil follows it night and day, and all the devils in hell and their instruments are at work to promote a toleration."* Can these sentiments be compared with Taylor's? Had Edwards's party been successful, they would have outstripped Laud in their career of persecution. The author fled to Holland at a later period, to escape the fury of the independents. Yet the presbyterians are often appealed to as the friends of liberty. Toleration was represented as the Trojan horse, full of warlike sectaries; as the box of Pandora, full of deadly woes: and this not by a few, but by the whole body of the presbyterians. Baillie termed toleration "a monstrous imagination: liberty of conscience and toleration is so prodigious an impiety, that this religious parliament cannot but abhor the very naming of it."† "Toleration makes the scripture a nose of wax."‡ "A toleration is putting a sword into a madman's hand; an appointing a city of refuge in men's consciences for the devil to fly to; a proclaiming liberty for the wolves to come into Christ's fold to prey upon the lambs: it is soul murder, and for establishing whereof, the damned souls in hell will eternally curse the men upon the earth."§

In addition to these works expressly on the subject, it

* Edwards's *Gangrena*, part i. pp. 85, 86.

† Baillie's *Dissuasive*.

‡ Rutherford's *Free Disputation*, p. 360.

§ *Harmony of Lancashire Ministers*, p. 12. "Independency," says Walker, "is a sink and common sewer of all errors, heresies, blasphemies, and schisms."—*Independency*.

was introduced into the pulpit in almost every sermon; it was described as bearing a resemblance to Noah's ark, a receptacle of every unclean beast, and as the very hydra of schisms and heresies. "Nothing will satisfy some, but a toleration of all religions. Ah! this is a provocation; for this, God may turn us into the wilderness again. That liberty of believing what men will, is no other than a liberty of erring. Men will at last take up swords and spears instead of pens, and defend by arms what they cannot do by arguments. If once we come to this, that any man be suffered to teach what he pleaseth, to be of what faith or religion seems good in his own eyes, farewell covenant, farewell reformed religion, farewell the peace and glory of England, if that day once come. But you (right honourable), I hope better things of you, though I thus speak. I hope, while you live and sit in parliament, this shall never be. It is not possible, that they which love God sincerely should desire to cherish different religions; for it is most certain, he that admits a contrary religion believes neither of them." * "I doubt not but your souls abhor that bloody tenet to the souls of men, that it is the duty of the magistrate to tolerate all religions. The toleration of every religion will destroy all religion. Let such toleration find allowance in the Turk's paradise; it shall never, I trust, be planted in the paradise of God." † "The city of London is become an Amsterdam: separation from our churches is countenanced; toleration is cried up. It overthroweth all church government, bringeth in confusions, and openeth a wide door unto all irreligion and atheism; for at the same door that all false religions come in, the true religion will quickly get out." ‡ In another sermon, Calamy tells the parliament, that the sins of the kingdom are committed by their connivance, and, consequently, become theirs; and call for "a

* Newcomen's Sermon, 1644.

† Good's Sermon, 1644.

‡ Calamy's Sermon, 1644.

parliament repentance." "You," says he, "if you do not suppress errors, are the anabaptists, and you are the anti-nomians; and it is you that hold that all religions are to be tolerated: these are your errors, if they spread by your connivance."* "To let the door so wide open as to tolerate all religions—to make London an Amsterdam—is such an undermining of the temple, that this would soon pull down God's house here, but never build it up."† "Liberty of conscience (falsely so called) may, in good time, improve itself into liberty of estates, and liberty of houses, and liberty of wives, and, in a word, liberty of perdition of souls and bodies."‡ "What! when we have so much appeared against popery and superstition, shall we now begin to think of indifferency and toleration?"§ "This, to the common enemy, is the Cape of Good Hope: the sound part are afraid lest the truth should come to beg for poor quarter, and be led captive, following the chariot of triumphant liberty. Some think, that episcopacy in his *pontificalibus* may, by this means, be retrieved and called from exile, to which it was sentenced by the covenant: and, that we might not be left alone to wonder at ourselves, our sympathising brethren abroad do wonder also, that we should be made the common sewer to receive the garbage of other churches, and that their stinking snuffs should be allowed candlesticks here in England."|| "I beseech you, take heed of tolerating all religions. Such liberty would usher in libertinism, and hasten our desolation."**

The sermons of the day abound in similar passages. It would be vain to search for such illiberality, and such strong opinions against liberty of conscience, in the writings of episcopalians. Even the titles of some of the books published by the presbyterians breathe the same intolerant spirit. John

* Calamy's Sermon, 1644.

† Care's Sermon, 1647, p. 33.

|| Vine's Sermon, 1646.

† Hill's Sermon, 1644, p. 34.

§ Horton's Sermon, 1646, p. 37.

** Ashe's Sermon, 1645, p. 32.

Vicars printed a work against the independents with the following title: "Coleman Street Conclave Visited; containing a most palpable and plain display of Mr. John Godwin's self-conviction, and of the notorious heresies, errors, malice, pride, and hypocrisy, of his most huge Garagantua, in falsely pretended piety, to the lamentable destruction of his too credulous soul-murdered proselytes of Coleman Street; collected chiefly out of his own big braggadocio, wave-like swelling and swaggering writing, full fraught with six-footed terms and fleshlike rhetorical phrases, far more than solid and sacred truths, and may fitly serve, like Belshazzar's hand-writing on the wall of his conscience, to strike terror and shame into his own soul and shameless face, and to undeceive his most miserably cheated, and enchanted or bewitched, followers." Bastwick wrote a book with the following title: "The utter routing of the whole army of all the independents and sectaries, with the total overthrow of their hierarchy, that new Babel, more groundless than that of the prelates. By John Bastwick, captain in the presbyterian army, doctor in physic, and physician in ordinary to all the ill-dependents, to sweat them with arguments twice a-year gratis."

These extracts prove that very noxious fruits would have been reaped from presbytery, if it had not been checked in its rapid growth. The public documents, also, of the two parties will shew the nature of the two systems. The articles and formularies of the church contain no strong expressions relative to any particular form of church government. The supposition, that a particular platform of government is prescribed in Holy Scripture, involves the terrible alternative, that while one church alone can possess it, all others are acting in opposition to the Divine will. The articles of the English church assert nothing of the kind, whatever may have been the opinions of individual bishops. But what is the language of the public documents of the presbyterians? The Divine right of presbyterial

government is positively asserted in the confession of faith and the book of discipline. The articles of the church of England breathe the spirit of liberality; but the covenant bound every presbyterian to endeavour to extirpate episcopacy. The episcopalians were never bound by their creed to destroy their opponents. The presbyterians fought not for liberty of conscience, but to impose the uniformity of the covenant. In Scotland, the same fruits were gathered from presbytery: in 1647, the Scottish assembly passed an act prohibiting the reading of books containing independency and baptism.*

It is not denied, that the principles of toleration originated in the commotions of those unhappy times. Liberty of conscience was a plant of slow growth: it struck its roots then, but the fruit was not gathered till the revolution in 1688. It required many troubles to bring it to perfection. The troubles endured at various times by all parties, by degrees led them to view toleration, not as a curse, but as a blessing. The greatest benefits frequently result from a concurrence of favourable and unfavourable circumstances. The severity of winter is as useful in contributing towards the maturity of the harvest as the heat of summer; and the principles of toleration were better understood, in consequence of the troubles of the times. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the English church led the way in this righteous cause: she first set the example, by conceding the act of toleration in 1688. So far from lagging behind, she outstripped the presbyterians, and conceded the boon, which, twenty years before, had been denied to all who refused to comply with the presbyterian discipline. That the church of England should have granted liberty of conscience to the very men who, when possessed of ecclesiastical authority, refused to tolerate the common prayer even in private, reflects the

* Acts of Assembly.

highest glory on her principles, and proves the moderation of her sentiments. "It was," says an able writer, "the Anglican writers of the latitudinarian school of Chillingworth, Hales, Taylor, Locke, and Hoadly, that rendered it (the principle) victorious."†

If, however, the act of uniformity was the only instance in which the rights of conscience have been denied, it would still be unjust to charge the church of England, in consequence of that act, with intolerance. Intolerance was not sanctioned by the principles of the church, though her members may have been guilty of illiberal acts: the act itself did not emanate from the church, but from the parliament; and because the members were churchmen, must the church incur all the odium? Is it not unreasonable, to condemn the principles of the church for the actions of her members? On the other hand, the illiberal acts of the presbyterians proceeded from their principles, and not from the parliament.

The spirit of presbytery was displayed in the treatment of those ministers, who, after having relinquished their livings in 1662, ultimately conformed to the established order. Many of the 2000 sufferers, as they are termed, submitted at a subsequent period. Tillotson was one of this number: he had submitted to the covenant, and also the engagement, and was ejected under the operation of the act. He conformed soon after, and eventually arrived at the highest station in the church. After his conformity, every effort was used to blacken his character: the following story was repeated for the purpose of exciting prejudice against him. It was stated, that after the battle of Worcester, Tillotson, then a fellow of his college, sent for the tables, on which was written the college grace, and, after the passage of thanksgiving for founders and benefactors, inscribed, with his own hand, "*Præsertim pro nuperâ victoriâ contra Carolum*

* Hallam, vol. iii. p. 276.

Stuartum in agro Wigorniensis reportatâ.” That this report was entirely false, having originated in malice, was abundantly proved. It was invented for the purpose of obscuring the fair fame of a man of unblemished reputation. Wood, whose dislike to Tillotson is well known, states, that in one of his sermons he asserted, that “conformists wore white surplices, but had black souls,” In 1661, he adhered to the presbyterians, and preached one of the morning exercises. Kidder, subsequently bishop of Bath and Wells, was ejected in 1662, and, like Tillotson, conformed after mature reflection. This treatment strengthens the proof of the intolerance of the presbyterians.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHARACTER OF SEQUESTERED CLERGY CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF THE
EJECTED MINISTERS IN 1662—SUFFERINGS OF THE TWO PARTIES RE-
VIEWED—NUMBERS STATED—ERRONEOUS STATEMENTS AND PREJUDICES
OF SOME OF THE ADVOCATES OF NONCONFORMITY—ORME’S LIFE OF
BAXTER.

THE impartial reader will scarcely be disposed to deny, that the church of England loses nothing by the comparison with her opponents during the period embraced in this volume. She was not so intolerant as the presbyterian hierarchy, nor were the sufferings of the ministers ejected in 1662 equal to those endured by the sequestered clergy. Between the case of many of the Bartholomew sufferers and the clergy sequestered by the parliament, there is a material difference: the latter were deprived in an illegal and arbitrary manner; while many of the former were only compelled to relinquish preferments to which they had no legal claim. Some of the individuals enumerated in Calamy’s list of sufferers were

only soldiers and mechanics, unqualified, by their habits and the want of education, for the ministerial office. They would have been ejected, even if presbytery had been established in 1662.

Calamy calls the ejected ministers "peaceable sufferers." Had none of these sufferers been guilty of acts of cruelty towards their sequestered predecessors? Many of them had refused to pay the fifths awarded by the parliamentary ordinance. Did the sequestered clergy complain?—were they less peaceable than the ejected ministers? Nay! did they not patiently suffer in silence during the space of twenty years? So far from being "peaceable sufferers," the ejected ministers were loud in their outcries against the government and the church. A very competent judge, and a very able writer, observes, in reference to the conduct of dissenters under sufferings, "To suffer in silence has at no time been a virtue with our protestant dissenters."*

Every attempt has been made to represent the sequestered clergy as a set of men of immoral character, and totally unqualified for the sacred office; while the virtues of the Bartholomew sufferers are lauded and magnified. The former were, however, as blameless in their lives and conversation as the latter, while their sufferings were far more severe. Every method that ingenuity could devise was resorted to, for the purpose of blackening their character: insult was heaped upon insult, and cruelty was added to injustice. As the clergy generally favoured the royal cause, the parliament endeavoured to weaken their influence with the people by injuring their reputation: they were charged with a popish leaning, simply because they were attached to the church of England. Ignorance and insufficiency were specified in the ordinances, though, in point of ability and learning, the sequestered clergy far surpassed their op-

* Hallam, vol. i. p. 270.

ponents. Many of them were remarkable for fertility of genius, vigour of judgment, and the extent of their acquirements. Hall, Usher, Lydiat, Taylor, Pococke, Sanderson, Stephens, and a host of others, were among the sufferers: can they be branded with the charge of ignorance? were they not the greatest men of the age in which they lived? To them was the literature of our land, during those times of enthusiasm, mainly indebted for its preservation.

It cannot be said that any means were adopted in 1662 to injure the character of the ejected ministers. They were not held up to reproach as scandalous ministers: the act of uniformity contained no reproachful terms; it simply required a compliance with its enactments. It is amusing to find such writers as Mr. Orme censuring the presbyterians for the severities exercised towards the independents and sectaries, and then exhibiting them as sufferers under the episcopalians. Every harsh epithet is applied to the act of 1662; but was it equally severe with the covenant? The act presented them with a full view of the evil—conformity or ejection: they were relieved from doubt and uncertainty; but the episcopal clergy were never safe; and not only were they expelled from their livings, but their property was plundered, and their persons exposed to the insults of the soldiers. In many cases they were imprisoned, and their lives placed in a state of jeopardy. In 1662, the ejections were accomplished at one and the same time, and by one act of parliament; the episcopal clergy were harassed for twenty years. Had one general test been applied, the proceeding would have been merciful in comparison of the conduct pursued by the parliament. The cruelty exercised upon the clergy during twenty years throws the act of uniformity completely into the shade.

From the practice of Baxter, Balis, Philip Henry, and others, it appears that many of the ejected ministers could conform as laymen, though not as ministers. Many of them

occasionally conformed during the remainder of their lives. They were fearful of incurring the guilt of schism, by setting up separate worship. Samuel Clarke remarks of the act of uniformity, "After which (though I durst not separate from the church of England, nor was satisfied about gathering a private church out of a true church, as I judge the church of England to be) I intermitted not my private studies."* Baxter regretted in his last days that he had by his practice countenanced the feeling against the use of the Lord's prayer. The practices of such men prove that, after all, the act of uniformity was not so barbarous a measure as party writers would lead their readers to imagine.

It is said that the bishops exercised undue severity towards the nonconformists. The bishops, however, could not go beyond the letter of the act; nor did they inflict so much severity as they themselves had received. At a period when it was deemed by both parties lawful to force the conscience, it cannot be considered strange that the restored bishops should feel a disposition to retaliate. The hostility, however, of the conformists soon ceased; and even in the reign of Charles, the parliament passed a bill of toleration. As the bill did not include the catholics, whose aim it was to keep the church and the nonconformists at variance, it was smuggled away on the day on which it should have received the royal assent. This circumstance, and similar attempts during the same reign, evince a conciliating spirit on the part of the members of the church towards their dissenting brethren.

Many pens have been employed in recounting the sufferings and magnifying the numbers of the ejected clergy; every attempt has been practised to perpetuate the recollection of their trials. There were, undoubtedly, errors committed by both parties; but it cannot be said that the epi-

* Clarke's Life.

scopal clergy did not bear their sufferings with dignity and patience. No murmuring remonstrances proceeded from their lips; no highly wrought statements from their pens: for years no one stepped forward to record their sufferings and vindicate their characters. Walker was the first chronicler of their trials; and he wrote at a period when the majority of the sufferers were removed into an eternal state. This work would never have been attempted but for the efforts of Calamy to record the sufferings of the ejected ministers. When the "Abridgement" was published, many of the sufferers under the Act of Uniformity were living: but the surviving sequestered clergy were very aged when Walker began to collect materials for his work. The number of the ejected ministers was easily ascertained: many of them began, soon after their removal from the church, to prepare records of their lives; and men of a kindred spirit have industriously transmitted their names to the present generation. The numbers of the clergy who suffered could never be accurately ascertained. Taken in the aggregate, the Bartholomew sufferers formed a motley assemblage; among them, indeed, were men who would have been an ornament to any church; but many of the occupants of livings were mechanics and soldiers, members of the various sects. All these are enumerated with untiring activity by the advocates of nonconformity.

It is generally stated in round numbers that two thousand ministers were ejected under the Act of Uniformity: this, however, is a mistake, as the whole number of those who were removed from the churches, from the restoration till the Act of Uniformity, did not amount to two thousand; and a very large proportion of them vacated their preferments, on the king's return, to the legal owners. If, however, the number had amounted to two thousand, does it bear any proportion to the number of the sequestered episcopalians? The sequestrations from 1640 till 1660 were far more

numerous than the ejections in 1662. The work of sequestration was diligently pursued for twenty years: the activity of the committees was unceasing, and their powers unlimited.

The cathedral clergy were among the earliest sufferers. The sees, deaneries, stalls, canonries, were all deprived of their occupants: they comprised a body of six or seven hundred clergymen. The numbers sequestered from their places in the universities were very large: the numbers of the parochial clergy cannot be ascertained. Heylin asserts, "that more were outed out of their livings by the presbyterians in the space of three years, than were deprived by the papists in the reign of Mary, or had been silenced and suspended, or deprived, by all the bishops from the first year of Elizabeth to those very times."* It is stated that one thousand were sequestered for refusing the covenant alone. The petition presented to Fairfax in 1647, sets forth that it proceeds from many thousands of the poor sequestered clergy in England and Wales; nor was it denied at the time that the numbers were correctly estimated. Walker states, on good authority, that all were sequestered, except a comparatively small number who complied. One hundred and ten were removed in London alone at a very early period. Of the nine thousand four hundred livings at that time in England and Wales, not less than five thousand were deprived of their legal occupants. This computation probably falls below the reality. In the MS. of Jeremy Stephens, who collected a large mass of materials on the subject, the number is estimated at eight thousand. The notorious White stated in parliament that eight thousand deserved sequestration; and soon after, in his "First Century of Scandalous Ministers," he boasted that he had actually turned out that number in the space of four or five years. White probably boasted of more deeds of wickedness than he had actually perpetrated.

* Heylin's History of the Presbyterians.

All the best authorities, however, concur in stating that more than one half of the clergy were sequestered. It is the practice to swell the lists of the ejected ministers in 1662 with the names of those who were only preparing for the ministry: if the same process were observed in increasing the numbers of the episcopal sufferers, it is probable that eight thousand would not be an even statement. Were all the undergraduates who were preparing for the ministry in the two universities enumerated in the catalogue, the numbers might reach even the amount stated by White.

The papers of many of the committees of sequestration were destroyed prior to the restoration. Had all these documents been preserved, they would have furnished a more accurate list of the sufferers than can now be recovered. Some of the presbyterian writers admit that one half of the clergy were expelled: this admission makes the number of sequestrations about five thousand. Walker adopted the only method that seemed likely to answer his purpose: he printed letters, which were forwarded to the archdeacons, to be communicated to the clergy at their visitations. Some of the packets never reached the individuals for whom they were intended; and many of the clergy neglected to answer the inquiries. His object was to obtain from the clergy all the information they could collect in their respective parishes relative to the ministers sequestered after 1640. Much information was collected, but from many parishes no answers were received. Calamy asserts that the Bartholomew sufferers were more numerous than the episcopal: such an assertion is a perversion of the truth. It is insinuated that, of ten thousand clergymen, eight thousand remained in the church under the operation of the covenant, which must have been the case if the sequestrations amounted only to two thousand. Hume, whose prejudices were by no means in favour of the church, remarks that, "by the most moderate calculation, one half of the episcopal clergy had been turned

out to beggary and want, for no other crime than adhering to the religions in which they had been educated."

It is asserted by Southey, in his "Book of the Church," that not less than eight thousand clergymen were sequestered. The assertion is met by Mr. Orme, in his "Life of Baxter," with a contemptuous sneer. It is easy to sneer, but not so easy to refute the statement. He merely observes that it was impossible, and insinuates that Southey was not in earnest when he made the assertion. From the foregoing statements, however, the reader will gather that eight thousand was much nearer the truth than two thousand. "The biographical collections furnish a pretty copious martyrology of men the most distinguished for their learning and virtues in that age. The remorseless and indiscriminate bigotry of presbyterianism might boast that it has heaped disgrace on Walton, and driven Lydiall to beggary: that it trampled on the old age of Hales, and embittered with insult the dying moments of Chillingworth."*

The most recent writer on the side of nonconformity is Mr. Orme. He takes it for granted the ejected clergy amounted to two thousand; but, like his predecessors, he uses every art to diminish the number of the episcopal sufferers. His "Life of Baxter" abounds in false statements and false colouring. The transactions of those times are greatly misrepresented: a few specimens of his statements will place the reader on his guard, and shew that Mr. Orme's assertions must be received with caution. It is well known that Baxter opposed the proceedings of the parliament after the expulsion of the presbyterians. Mr. Orme questions Baxter's prudence in this measure: "Baxter was inconsistent in following the parliament, and then opposing the existing government while prosecuting the object of the original contest."† The writer knew, when he penned this

* Hallam, vol. iii. p. 226.

† Orme's Baxter.

passage, that the major part of the members were excluded by a military force. Baxter did not cease to follow the parliament: had the majority been permitted to act, Baxter would have been found with them. He would have been inconsistent in supporting the rump faction under the direction of the army. As to the "object of the original contest," the writer knew that he was uttering a falsehood. Let any impartial person decide whether, after the expulsion of the presbyterians, the mock parliament pursued the object for which they originally contended. Mr. Orme knew that the object of the contest was to secure the monarchy, but to circumscribe the exercise of the prerogative within definite boundaries. The object was not to erect a republic, nor to murder the sovereign; yet these two things had been accomplished by that mock assembly under the guidance of the army. Unless, therefore, Baxter had originally desired a republic, and sought the life of the king, he could not, consistently with his principles, have given his support to the independent parliament. After such a wilful perversion of truth, can the statements of such a writer be received without great caution?

Baxter is not the only individual traduced in Mr. Orme's narrative. Even Calamy is accused of hesitation at the restoration; consequently, the episcopal sufferers cannot expect very gentle treatment from such a prejudiced writer. He tells his readers, with unbounded assurance, that the question with the nonconformists in 1662 was, "Whether they should submit to man or God." The real question, however, at issue was, whether episcopacy should be restored or presbytery be continued. Does Mr. Orme mean to say that presbytery was sanctioned by Divine appointment, while episcopacy was merely a human institution? As an independent, Mr. Orme would scarcely admit such an alternative.

But the most flagrant instance of prejudice is his observations on the "Polity" of Hooker. Instead of attempting

to refute the arguments of that unanswerable work, to which no dissenter has ever attempted to reply, he dismisses the subject with a bold assertion, "that had Hooker's 'Polity' been written in defence of the popish hierarchy, it would have required little alteration." Such is the treatment experienced by the immortal Hooker at the hands of this pigmy in literature. These extracts from Mr. Orme's work—and they might be multiplied—are sufficient to stamp it as a most illiberal and unchristian performance.

It is amusing to hear modern dissenters glory in their being the descendants of the puritans. In no instance, however, do they copy their example. The early puritans conformed to the liturgy, a few things excepted; they contended for an established church; most of them remained in the church until the day of their death; and in their printed works they frequently allude to the formularies of the church. At the restoration, the nonconformists occupied nearly the same position, and would have been satisfied with a few alterations. Modern dissenters differ as widely from the early puritans and the nonconformists of 1662, as they do from the established church. By the puritans they would be deemed schismatics for gathering separate churches. Modern dissenters denounce establishments as unscriptural; but the puritans and nonconformists contended that they were necessary. In 1662, a few alterations would have satisfied the ejected ministers; but no alterations would satisfy dissenters. The former would have retained a moderate episcopacy; by the latter it is viewed as an offset of popery. Were the puritans and nonconformists to revisit the earth, they would denounce dissent as the engine of Satan. It is an absurdity for modern dissenters to claim any relationship with the puritans, whose principles were diametrically opposite to their own.

From the preceding statements the reader will perceive that the church of England never was, as is asserted by her

enemies, the unrelenting opponent of toleration. She was more tolerant than the presbyterian hierarchy, and was foremost in the ranks of those by whom the act of toleration was granted. The course pursued by the parliament was the wisest that could have been adopted ; events have fully proved that in insisting on one uniform mode of worship in the church, with free toleration to tender consciences, the legislators of 1688 were guided in a remarkable manner. But for the formularies of the church, the doctrines would have been corrupted. On the continent, those churches in which presbytery prevailed have almost all gone over to Socinianism. The church of Geneva, planted and nourished by the fostering care of Calvin himself, is swallowed up by the soul-destroying heresy of Socinus. In England, all the old presbyterian congregations are become Socinians ; and these effects often take place among congregations of modern dissenters. But the English church continues in her purity ; her liturgy, her articles, her homilies, remain the same. The churchman not only views the liturgy and formularies as the guardians of the truth, but, in using them, he is animated by the recollection, that they were framed and used by martyrs, and that in the defence of the church many have not hesitated to consign their bodies to the flames.

THE END.

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